Valentines High School

KS5 Academic Learning Journey

Psychology

Year 1 Skills (Year 12)

The skills a student will need to master for A-level psychology are taught and developed in year 12. Initially scaffolding is provided to enable students to utilise these skills. At the end of the academic year students should have a full understanding of these skills and had opportunities to demonstrate them.

A01: Knowledge & Understanding	**A02: Application**	**A03: Analysis and Evaluation**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures: a. in a theoretical context b. in a practical context c. when handling qualitative and quantitative data**.**	Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to: i. make judgements and reach conclusions develop and refine practical design and procedures.
Your ability to read, identify, remember and understand information.	**Your ability to be able to apply your knowledge appropriately to a context (a scenario).**	**Your ability to analyse and make comparisons, assess how similar/different the content is.**

KS4 Skills

English - Reading comprehension - Structure and organise as argument. - Use of evidence to formulate conclusions. - Critically evaluating use of evidence. Science - Application of biological concepts to given material.	Maths - Arithmetic and numerical computation. - Handling data (qualitative and quantitative data/ significant figures/probability). - Algebra (use the symbols: =, <, <<, >>, >, ∝, ~/solve simple algebraic equations).

- Practical skills from the planning and implementation of science experiments.	- Graphs (translate information between graphical, numerical and algebraic forms).

Year 1 Knowledge (Year 12)

Memory

Sensory register, short-term memory and long-term memory (coding, capacity and duration). Types of long-term memory: episodic, semantic, procedural. Central executive, phonological loop, visuo-spatial sketchpad and episodic buffer. Proactive and retroactive interference and retrieval failure due to absence of cues. Factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony: misleading information, including leading questions and post-event discussion; anxiety. Usefulness of the cognitive interview.

Attachment

Caregiver-infant interactions in humans: reciprocity and interactional synchrony. Stages of attachment identified by Schaffer. Multiple attachments and the role of the father. Animal studies of attachment and explanations of attachment. The concepts of a critical period and an internal working model. Types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant and insecure resistant including cultural variations. Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation and Romanian orphan studies: effects of institutionalisation including the influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships.

Social Influence

Types of conformity and explanations for conformity. Research by Milgram, Asch and Zimbardo. Socio-psychological and dispositional explanations of obedience. Locus of control and social support. Minority influence and social change.

Approaches

Classical conditioning and Pavlov's research, operant conditioning, types of reinforcement and Skinner's research. Social learning theory including imitation, identification, modelling, vicarious reinforcement, the role of mediational processes and Bandura's research. The study of internal mental processes, the role of schema, the use of theoretical and computer models to explain and make inferences about mental processes. The emergence of cognitive neuroscience. The influence of genes, biological structures, neurochemistry, genotype and phenotype and evolution on behaviour. The role of the unconscious, the structure of personality: ID, ego and superego, defence mechanisms including repression, denial and displacement, psychosexual stages. Free will, self-actualisation and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, focus on the self, congruence, the role of conditions.

Psychopathology

Deviation from social norms, failure to function adequately, statistical infrequency and deviation from ideal mental health definitions of abnormality. The behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of phobias, depression and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Phobias: the two-process model, systematic desensitisation, including relaxation and use of hierarchy; flooding. Beck's negative triad and Ellis's ABC model of depression; cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), including challenging irrational thoughts. Genetic and neural explanations; drug therapy.

Research Methods

The difference between aims and hypotheses. The difference between population and sample; sampling techniques including: random, systematic, stratified, opportunity and volunteer; implications of sampling techniques, including bias and generalisation. Pilot studies and experimental designs: repeated measures, independent groups, matched pairs. Observational design: behavioural categories; event sampling; time sampling. Questionnaire construction, including use of open and closed questions; design of interviews.

Manipulation and control of variables, including independent, dependent, extraneous, confounding; operationalisation of variables. Control: random allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation and standardisation. Demand characteristics and investigator effects. Ethical issues in the design and conduct of psychological studies; dealing with ethical issues in research. The role of peer review in the scientific process. The implications of psychological research for the economy. Reliability across all methods of investigation. Ways of assessing reliability: test-retest and inter-observer; improving reliability. Types of validity across all methods of investigation: face validity, concurrent validity, ecological validity and temporal validity. Assessment of validity. Improving validity. Features of science: objectivity and the empirical method; replicability and falsifiability; theory construction and hypothesis testing; paradigms and paradigm shifts.

Reporting psychological investigations. Quantitative and qualitative data; the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Primary and secondary data, including meta-analysis. Descriptive statistics: measures of central tendency – mean, median, mode; calculation of mean, median and mode; measures of dispersion; range and standard deviation; calculation of range; calculation of percentages; positive, negative and zero correlations. Presentation and display of quantitative data: graphs, tables, scattergrams, bar charts, histograms. Distributions: normal and skewed distributions; characteristics of normal and skewed distributions. Analysis and interpretation of correlation, including correlation coefficients. Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval. Content analysis and coding. Thematic analysis.

Year 2 Skills (Year 13)

1. Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:
   - in a theoretical context
   - in a practical context
   - when handling qualitative and quantitate data.

2. Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to Year 2 topics. Make judgements and reach evidenced conclusions.

3. Evaluate therapies and treatment in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness.

4. Practical and mathematical skills developed through:
   - designing research
   - analysing and interpreting data.

The A-level skills remain the same during the linear course but are consolidated during Year 13. Students should be able to independently demonstrate their proficiency of these skills in relation to year 2 topics.

Year 2 Knowledge (Year 13)

Biopsychology

The nervous system (central and peripheral) and endocrine system (glands and hormones). The structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons. Synaptic transmission, including reference to neurotransmitters, excitation and inhibition. The fight or flight response including the role of adrenaline. Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation; Broca's and Wernicke's areas, split brain research. Plasticity and functional recovery of the brain after trauma. Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI); electroencephalogram (EEGs) and event-related potentials (ERPs); post-mortem examinations. Circadian, infradian and ultradian and the difference between these rhythms (endogenous pacemakers and exogenous zeitgebers - sleep/wake cycle).

Schizophrenia

Positive symptoms and negative symptoms of schizophrenia. Reliability and validity in diagnosis and classification of schizophrenia: co-morbidity, culture and gender bias and symptom overlap. Genetics, the dopamine hypothesis/neural correlates, family dysfunction and cognitive explanations (dysfunctional thought processing) of schizophrenia. Typical and atypical antipsychotics, cognitive behaviour therapy and family therapy. Token economies as used in the management of schizophrenia. Interactionist approach: the diathesis-stress model.

Relationships

The evolutionary explanations for partner preferences, including the relationship between sexual selection and human reproductive behaviour. Factors affecting attraction in romantic relationships: self-disclosure; physical attractiveness, including the matching hypothesis; filter theory, including social demography, similarity in attitudes and complementarity. Social exchange theory, equity theory and Rusbult's investment model of relationships (commitment, satisfaction, comparison with alternatives and investment). Duck's phase model of relationship breakdown: intra-psychic, dyadic, social and grave dressing phases. Self-disclosure in virtual relationships; effects of absence of gating on the nature of virtual relationships. Levels of parasocial relationships, the absorption addiction model and the attachment theory explanation.

Aggression

Neural and hormonal mechanisms in aggression (limbic system, serotonin and testosterone). Genetic factors in aggression (MAOA gene). The ethological explanation of aggression, including reference to innate releasing mechanisms and fixed action patterns. Evolutionary explanations of human aggression. Frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory as applied to human aggression, and de-individuation explanations. Dispositional and situational explanations of institutional aggression. Media influences on aggression, including the effects of computer games. The role of desensitisation, disinhibition and cognitive priming.

Issues and debates

Gender bias including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias; cultural bias, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism (universality). Free will and determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism; biological, environmental and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations. The nature-nurture debate: the relative importance of heredity and environment in determining behaviour; the interactionist approach. Holism and reductionism: levels of explanation in psychology. Biological reductionism and environmental (stimulus-response) reductionism. Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation. Ethical implications of research studies and theory, including reference to social sensitivity.