**Year 11 Psychology Activities**

Psychology is a subject that investigates us as human beings. It is a subject that requires a broad range of skills from scientific planning and investigation to reading and critically evaluating / debating to statistical analysis of data. These activities are designed to show you each aspect of Psychology to prepare you for the A Level, should you decide to take it.

Consolidation of GCSE studies:

Although you have not studied Psychology at GCSE you could prepare for the A level by:

* Reviewing your lessons and notes from Biology on the nervous system as this is relevant to Psychology.
* Making sure your maths skills are up to speed (particularly % increase and % decrease, mean, median, mode and range, ratios and probability, all charts and graphs and scattergrams). You will need all these.

Psychology is a subject that relates to ‘real-life’.

Activity 1:

Keep a scrapbook (digital or paper) of articles in the news that are linked to how people behave, how they think, what motivates them etc. Annotate each article with a summary of the main points and create a glossary of terms that are new to you. You should find at least one article per week.

Use the following sources:

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)                                                             [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

[www.thetimes.co.uk](http://www.thetimes.co.uk)                                                    [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)

Searches in the science, health, family and business sections may be useful or use the search box and enter ‘psychology’. I recently found an article on ‘The Psychology of Panic Buying’!

Psychology involves studying our amazing brain.

Activity 2:

* Research and make a table of notes on the following ways of studying the brain: MRI scan, fMRI scan, EEG and Post-Mortem. You will need to find out what these abbreviations mean first! Make sure you include strengths and weaknesses of each method.
* Create a drawing/picture of the brain. It can be a scientific drawing in cross section or even an artistic representation using any medium, digital, drawing, painting or otherwise. The best ones will be used to decorate the classroom. Spend some time learning about the different parts of the brain and their function; it will really help you in your A level.

Activity 3:

Investigate the question: ‘are criminals born or made?’ You should produce a 500-1000-word essay considering this question and weighing up the arguments and the evidence. The ‘born’ side of the argument (nature) suggests criminal behaviour is influenced by genetics or the brain, or nervous system malfunctions. The ‘made’ side of the argument (nurture) suggests that criminal behaviour is influenced by personality, dysfunctional thinking (cognition) or learning and environment. What will your conclusion be? In Psychology you have to give a measured conclusion based on the weight of the evidence for each side and not on personal opinion. You might like to include a case study of a serial killer or other famous criminal in your work, as an example.

A good source of explanations is [www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-forensic.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-forensic.html)

Psychology involves investigating human behaviour

Activity 4:

Watch episodes 4 and 5 of “The Innocence Files” on Netflix. Focus on the eyewitness testimony that put an innocent man in jail. Make detailed comments what was wrong with the way the witness testimony was gathered by detectives? What does this tell you about the reliability of eyewitness testimony? Can you trust eyewitness testimony - especially if it’s the only evidence put forward? What does this tell you about the way memory is stored and retrieved? If you were the detective - what would you have done differently to make sure you obtain accurate eyewitness testimony? Use the following link to help you collaborate your ideas <https://www.innocenceproject.org/how-eyewitness-misidentification-can-send-innocent-people-to-prison/>

Once you have completed this task, look up “Loftus and Palmer Car Crash experiment” on youtube. Write down the Aim (what they were trying to find out) of the their experiment, The Procedure (what did they actually do) of and the Results (what did they find). Replicate this study with your own family members - show them a video clip of a car crash and ask them the same questions Loftus and Palmer asked their participants. Did your findings resemble the findings Loftus and Palmer got?  Finally, explain what could be the link between leading questions and false eyewitness testimony?