



ST CHRISTOPHER'S SIXTH FORM

# PSYCHOLOGY

BRIDGING UNIT

## Introduction

### What is Psychology?

Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour. It is concerned with how people think, feel, develop and act, and tries to explain why people behave the way they do.

### What topics will I be studying?

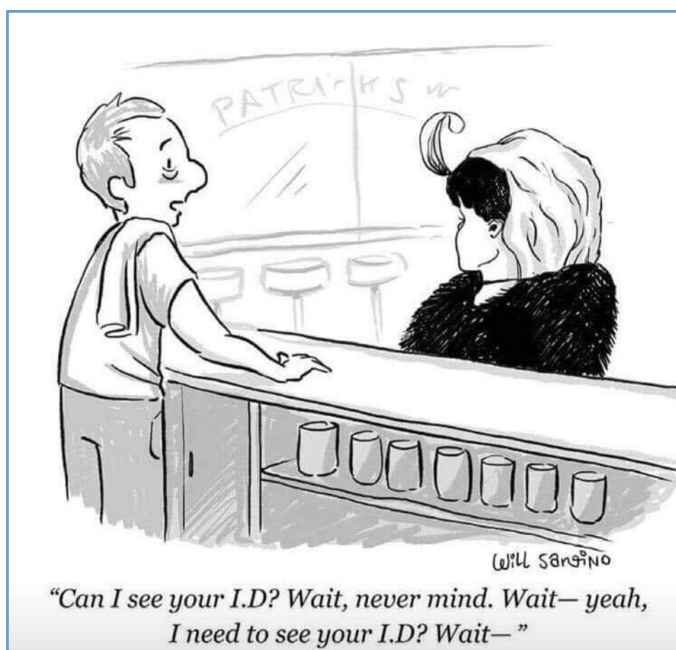
The Psychology course is divided up into three Papers:

AQA A-Level Course		
Paper 1 Introductory topic	Paper 2 Psychology in Context	Paper 3 Issues and Options in Psychology
<b>Topics:</b> Section A: Social influence Section B: Memory Section C: Attachment Section D: Psychopathology	<b>Topics:</b> Section A: Approaches Section B: Biopsychology Section C: Research Methods	<b>Topics:</b> Section A: Issues and debates Section B: Gender Section C: Stress Section D: Forensic psychology
<b>Assessment:</b> short answer and extended writing questions 96 marks in total (2 hours) (1/3 of A level)	<b>Assessment:</b> short answer and extended writing questions 96 marks in total (2 hours) (1/3 of A level)	<b>Assessment:</b> short answer and extended writing questions 96 marks in total (2 hours) (1/3 of A level)

### What do I need to do to prepare for next year?

You have two important tasks to complete **before** we see you in September:

- 1. Complete tasks 1-4 in this booklet.** You will need some paper/Word document to record your answers. Start it as soon as possible so that if there are any tasks you don't understand you can contact me to clarify what you need to do. You can email me at [t.johnson@st-christophers.org](mailto:t.johnson@st-christophers.org)
- 2. Get organised** - get a new file to bring to lessons, a ring binder to file notes in at home, an A4 notepad, coloured pens, file dividers, highlighters, calculator etc.

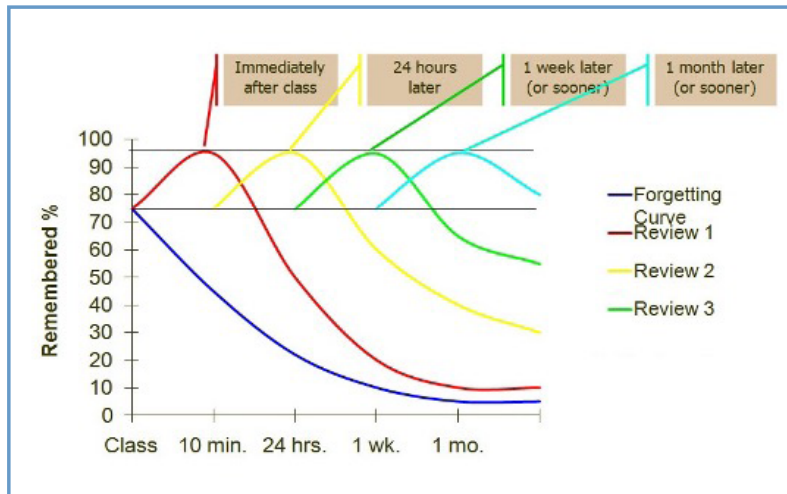


# What can I learn from Psychology to help me be successful?

Psychologists can tell us a lot about how to study more effectively and more successfully. We can use what they tell us about memory and cognition to enhance our learning capabilities.

## TASK 1:

Read the information below and explain how we can use it to help us study more effectively.



### 1) Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve

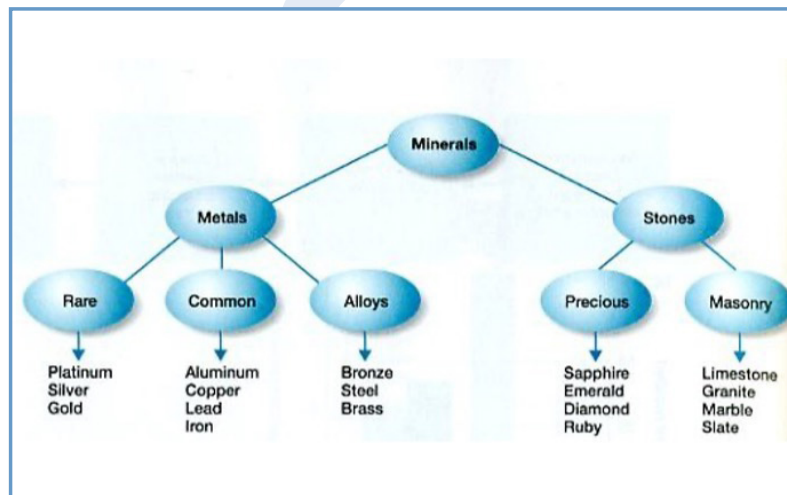
The Ebbinghaus Retention Curve, also known as the forgetting curve, shows the rate at which memories are lost over time. It is named after Hermann Ebbinghaus, a pioneering researcher of human memory. He showed that we start to forget items rapidly once we stop rehearsing the material; then the rate of forgetting (or memory decay) slows. He also showed that the more time we initially spend rehearsing information, the less time it takes to relearn it later, and information we spend more time rehearsing decays at a slower rate.

**What does this suggest about how and when you should revise the new information that you learn in psychology classes?**

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### 2) Bower's Organisational Hierarchies

Bower et al (1969) demonstrated the power of organisation. Participants in his experiment had 112 words to learn, presented in 4 trials, 28 words a trial. Half the participants were presented with the words organised into conceptual hierarchies (see left), the other half were simply shown lists of words. They found that subjects presented with the organised lists remembered around 47% more words than subjects presented a list without organisation.

**What does this suggest about how you take notes and revise in Psychology?**

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# Psychology

## 3) Mental Imagery

This technique involves linking items that are to-be-remembered with a mental image, so that the two words are interacting in some way.

For example, Bower (1972) showed that asking participants to form a mental image of unrelated nouns (e.g. dog and hat, so that they imagined a dog wearing a bowler hat) resulted in significantly better recall than when participants were instructed merely to memorise the words. Bower considered that the more unusual the image the better.



**How can you use this information to help you to study more effectively in Psychology?**

## 4) Levels of Processing

The levels-of-processing effect, identified by Craik and Lockhart in 1972, describes memory recall of stimuli as a function of the depth of mental processing. Deeper levels of analysis produce more elaborate, longer lasting, and stronger memory traces than shallow levels of analysis.

In 1975, the Craik and Tulving conducted an experiment in which participants were shown a list of 60 words. They were then asked to recall certain words by being shown one of three questions, each testing a different level of processing, similar to:

- Was the word in capital letters or lower case? (Tests structural processing: shallow processing)
- Does the word rhyme with (another word)? (Tests phonemic/auditory processing, as the participant has to listen to the word judge whether it rhymes with another word)
- Does the word fit in the following sentence...? (Tests semantic processing; understanding the meaning of the word: deep processing/ elaborate rehearsal)

Out of another larger list, the participants were asked to pick out the appropriate word, as the original words had been mixed into this list. Craik & Tulving found that participants were better able to recall words which had been processed more deeply - that is, processed semantically, supporting level of processing theory.

**What does this suggest about how you can learn effectively?**



## What areas of Psychology interest you?

Psychology is a massive subject with lots to discover. It's great to research independently into areas you are interested in as there is a lot that we don't cover in lessons.

### TASK 2 (YouTube):

- a. Visit Crash Course Psychology (on YouTube) and watch a few videos that you think might interest you
- b. Visit YouTube TED talks and pick one of the following:
  - **How reliable is your memory?** TED talk by Elizabeth Loftus (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB2OegI6wvI>)
  - **Exploring the mind of a killer** – Jim Fallon (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2V0vOFexY4>)
  - **Sleep is your superpower** – Matthew Walker (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MulMqhT8DM>)

Answer the questions below in relation to the videos you have watched:

1. Which episode/s did you watch? .....
2. What is it about? .....
3. What are the main points? .....
4. What questions do you have? .....
5. What parts did you not understand? .....
6. What did you discover? .....

### TASK 3 (Podcasts):

Have a listen to a few Podcast episodes from the suggested list below that you think might interest you. Answer the questions below in relation to the Podcasts you listened to.

1. Which episode/s did you listen to? .....
2. What is it about? .....
3. What are the main points? .....
4. What questions do you have? .....
5. What parts did you not understand? .....
6. What did you discover? .....

#### Recommended Podcasts:

- **All in the Mind** – BBC Radio 4 podcast that explores the limits and potential of the human mind. Great to keep up-to-date with the latest goings on in psychology (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9/episodes/downloads>)
- **Hidden Brain** – Hidden brain helps curious people understand the world – and themselves. Using science and storytelling, Hidden Brain's host reveals the unconscious patterns that drive human behaviour, the biases that shape our choices, and the triggers that direct the course of our relationships (<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510308/hidden-brain?t=1585062609174>)
- **Mind Changers** – BBC Radio 4 podcast that explores the development of the science of Psychology during the 20th Century. Many of the names covered in this series we will learn about on the course (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008cy1j/episodes/player>)
- **Revisionist History** – Revisionist History is Malcolm Gladwell's journey through the overlooked and the misunderstood. Every episode re-examines something from the past – an event, a person, an idea, even a song – and asks whether we got it right the first time (<http://revisionisthistory.com/>)

## Approaches in Psychology

An “approach” is a way of addressing the problem of explaining behaviour. So, whether its aggression or a mental disorder psychologists try to explain the behaviour from different approaches.

### TASK 4:

Use the internet to find out about the following key ideas of the following approaches to psychology.

#### **Biological Approach**

Different areas of your brain are thought to be responsible for different behaviours. Try to find 5 examples of this:

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#### **Behaviourist Approach**

What is operant conditioning? How might this be involved in gambling and addiction?

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#### **Social Learning Theory**

What does Bandura’s Bobo doll study teach us about behaviour, particularly aggression & violence?

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## Cognitive Approach

What is meant by irrational thinking? How does Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) work?

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## Psychodynamic Approach

According to Sigmund Freud, your unconscious mind controls your behaviour, including the idea that much of your dreams are symbolic. Find out some interpretations of different dreams:

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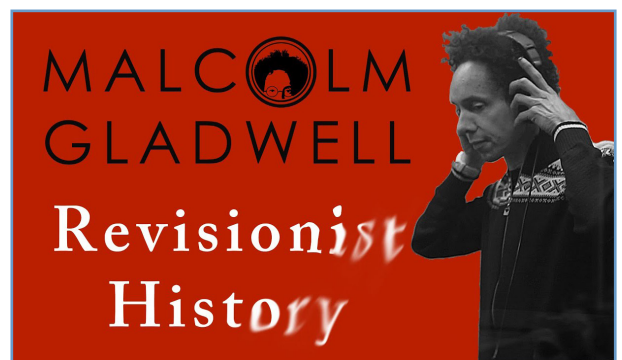
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## Optional Extras – Exploring Psychology further...

### Recommended Podcasts

1. **All in the Mind** – BBC Radio 4 podcast that explores the limits and potential of the human mind. Great to keep up-to-date with the latest goings on in psychology.
2. **Revisionist History** – Revisionist History is Malcolm Gladwell's journey through the overlooked and the misunderstood. Every episode re-examines something from the past – an event, a person, an idea, even a song – and asks whether we got it right the first time.
3. **Hidden Brain** – Hidden brain helps curious people understand the world – and themselves. Using science and storytelling, Hidden Brain's host reveals the unconscious patterns that drive human behaviour, the biases that shape our choices, and the triggers that direct the course of our relationships.
4. **The Psychology Podcast** – Gives you insights into the mind, brain, behaviour and creativity. Each episode features a guest who will stimulate your mind, and give you a greater understanding of your self, others, and the world we live in.
5. **Jordan B. Peterson Podcast** – The podcast offers discussion and information concerning a variety of complex ideas: How moral & pragmatic values regulate emotion and motivation; Psychometric models such as the Big Five; The significance of hero mythology; The meaning of music, and the structure of the world as represented through religion and spiritual belief.
6. **99% Invisible** – this podcast is a weekly exploration of the process and power of design and architecture.
7. **Serial** – this podcast unfolds one story – a true story – over the course of a whole season, and follows the plot and characters wherever they lead.
8. **Speaking of Psychology** – highlights some of the latest, most important and relevant psychological research being conducted today.



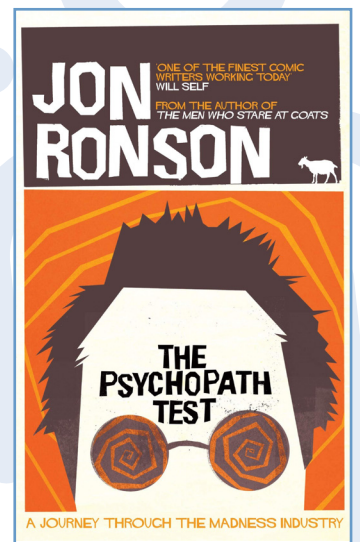
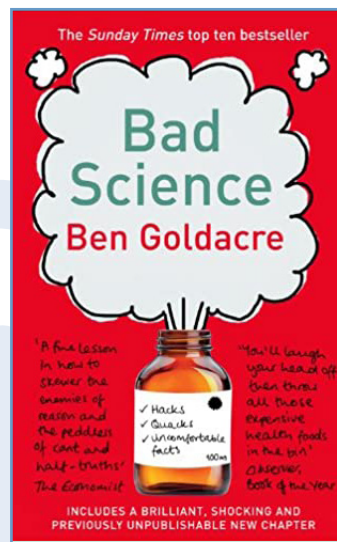
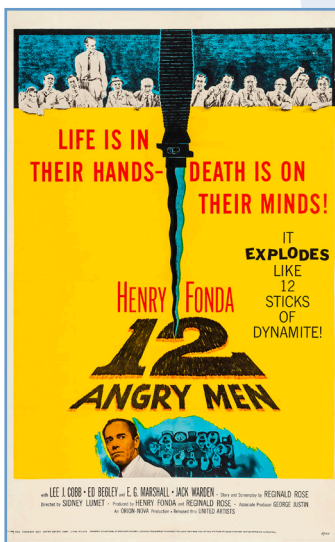


## Recommended Films

1. 12 Angry Men
2. Arrival
3. A Beautiful Mind
4. The Blind Side
5. The Bourne Identity
6. The Bourne Supremacy
7. The Bourne Ultimatum
8. Catch Me If You Can
9. Citizen Four
10. The Dark Knight
11. The Experiment
12. The Experimenters
13. Flight
14. 50 First Dates
15. Good Will Hunting
16. Hotel Rwanda
17. Inception
18. The King's Speech
19. Memento
20. The Notebook
21. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
22. The Prestige
23. The Social Network
24. The Shawshank Redemption
25. Shutter Island

## Recommended Books

1. Black Box Thinking - Matthew Syed
2. Bounce - Matthew Syed
3. Blink - Malcolm Gladwell
4. Outliers - Malcolm Gladwell
5. Tipping Point - Malcolm Gladwell
6. Bad Science - Ben Goldacre
7. It's Probably A Bit More Complicated than That - Ben Goldacre
8. Man's Search for Meaning - Viktor Frankl
9. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time - Mark Haddon
10. Freakonomics - Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitt
11. The Psychopath Test - Jon Ronson
12. Quirkology - Richard Wiseman
13. Thinking Fast and Slow - Daniel Kahneman (a more challenging read)
14. The Power of Habit - Charles Duhigg
15. The Man who Mistook His Wife for a Hat - Oliver Sachs
16. Musicophilia - Oliver Sachs
17. Opening Skinner's Box - Lauren Slater
18. Great Myths of the Brain - Christian Jarrett
19. Why We Sleep - Matthew Walker
20. The Brain - Catherine Loveday
21. The Brain that Changes Itself - Norman Doidge
22. The Brain: The Story of You - David Eagleman
23. We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves - Karen Fowler
24. Elephants on Acid - Alex Boose









**“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.”**

Jeremiah 29:11

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