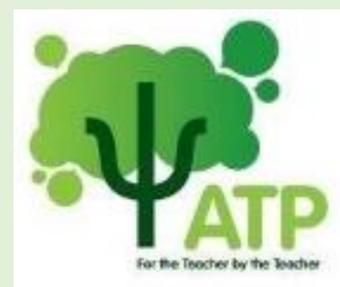


TRANSITION PACK FOR A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY

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

- ✓ Books
- ✓ Films and TED talks
- ✓ Activities involving note taking skills
- ✓ Topics to research
- ✓ Online learning courses
- ✓ Trips

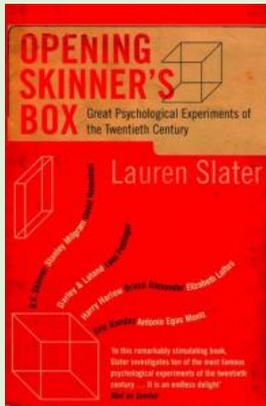


This pack contains a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start an A-level in Psychology in September. It is aimed to be used after you complete your GCSEs and throughout the remainder of the summer term and over the summer holidays to ensure you are ready to start your course in September.

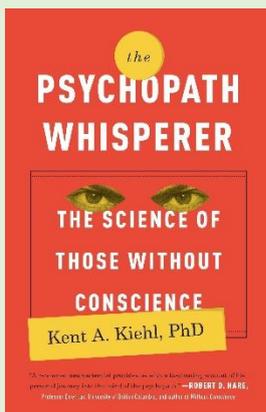


You could read this

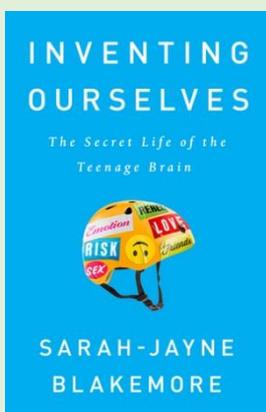
These books are all popular books about psychology, and great for extending your knowledge and understanding.



In *Opening Skinner's Box*, Lauren Slater 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.



We know of psychopaths from chilling headlines and stories in the news and movies from Ted Bundy and John Wayne Gacy, to Hannibal Lecter and Dexter Morgan. As Dr Kent Kiehl shows, psychopaths can be identified by a checklist of symptoms that includes pathological lying; lack of empathy, guilt, and remorse; grandiose sense of self-worth; manipulation; and failure to accept ones actions. But why do psychopaths behave the way they do? Is it the result of their environment how they were raised or is there a genetic component to their lack of conscience?



Drawing upon her cutting-edge research Professor Blakemore explores: What makes the adolescent brain different? Why does an easy child become a challenging teenager? What drives the excessive risk-taking and the need for intense friendships common to teenagers? Why it is that many mental illnesses – depression, addiction, schizophrenia – begin during these formative years. And she shows that while adolescence is a period of vulnerability, it is also a time of enormous creativity and opportunity.

You could watch this



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.



McMurphy has a criminal past and has once again got himself into trouble and is sentenced by the court. To escape labour duties in prison, McMurphy pleads insanity and is sent to a ward for the mentally unstable. Once here, McMurphy both endures and stands witness to the abuse and degradation of the oppressive Nurse Ratched, who gains superiority and power through the flaws of the other inmates. McMurphy and the other inmates band together to make a rebellious stance against the atrocious nurse.



Following a crack team of forensic specialists from Northumbria Police, this BBC 2 series charts the fascinating journey of individual pieces of evidence from the moment they are discovered at the crime scene, through to microscopic analysis at specialist laboratories - and shows the pivotal role the findings have on each investigation.



The Real Rain Man documents Kim Peek, the genius who inspired Dustin Hoffman's character in Rain Man. Classed as a mega-savant, having memorised 12,000 books, including the entire Bible, he also has autism, finding it hard to do day-to-day tasks.

Best 7 TED talks

1. [How we read each other's minds, Rebecca Saxe](#)

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.

2. [The riddle of experience vs. memory, Daniel Kahneman](#)

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.

3. [The paradox of choice, Barry Schwartz](#)

More choice is always better, right? Not according to Schwartz, a psychologist who argues that having to decide which of approximately 6,000 brands of similar toothpaste to buy "has made us not freer but more paralyzed, not happier but more dissatisfied.

4. [Are we in control of our own decisions?, Dan Ariely](#)

This talk "uses classic visual illusions and Ariely's own counterintuitive (and sometimes shocking) research findings to show how we're not as rational as we think when we make decisions.

5. [Flow, the secret to happiness, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi](#)

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.

6. [The power of vulnerability, Brené Brown](#)

One of the top-five-most-popular TED Talks of all time, this moving account of Brown's own struggles with shame and control weaves together sometimes hilarious personal anecdotes with hard research to convince viewers that forging real connections requires the bravery to be vulnerable.

7. [The psychology of evil, Philip Zimbardo](#)

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.'

How to take notes

Making effective notes in lessons is an essential skill for A-level Psychology. Practice producing notes using the Cornell System by summarising two of the TED talks you have listened to. Complete your notes in the following format and show them to your teacher.

TOPIC	SUBJECT
	DATE
LESSON FOCUS	
QUESTIONS AND CUE-WORDS	NOTE TAKING 1. Record: During the lecture, use the note-taking column to record the lesson using concise sentences and abbreviations. 2. Questions: As soon after class as possible, write questions in the left hand column based on the notes in the note taking column. Writing questions helps to clarify meanings, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for exam studying later. 3. Recite: Cover the note-taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue word column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cue-words. 4. Reflect: Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: "What's the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What's beyond them? 5. Review: Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you'll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.
SUMMARY After class, use this space at the bottom of each page to summarize the notes on that page.	

Topics to research

Memory

Memory helps make individuals who they are. Without the help of memories, someone would struggle to learn new information, form lasting relationships, or function in daily life. Memory allows the brain to encode, store, and retrieve information.

Different areas of the brain affect different aspects of memory. The hippocampus, for instance, is related to spatial memory, which helps the brain map the surrounding world and find its way around a known place. The amygdala, on the other hand, is linked to emotional memory.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/basics/memory>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/memory.html>

Obedience

Obedience is a form of social influence where an individual acts in response to a direct order from another individual, who is usually an authority figure. It is assumed that without such an order the person would not have acted in this way.

Stanley Milgram (1963) wanted to investigate whether Germans were particularly obedient to authority figures as this was a common explanation for the Nazi killings in World War II.

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/obedience.html>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html>

Criminal psychology

Criminal psychology looks at the interaction between psychology and criminology and criminal justice. It is concerned with using psychological research and theories to analyse and improve the criminal justice system. Try the 'You be the Judge' activity by following this link. YOU hear the case, YOU decide the sentence!

<http://ybtj.justice.gov.uk/>

Issues in mental health

What do we mean by mental health? Which behaviours should be classified as 'sane' or 'insane', and which should be medicated or treated non-biologically? Perhaps we shouldn't treat any mental illness at all and simply accept the diversity of human behaviour? Follow these links to find out more about the explanations and treatments of mental illness.

[Drug use and psychotic disorders](#)

[Virtual reality as a cure for fear of heights](#)

[Body clock disruptions linked to mood disorders](#)

[Regular exercise and risk of depression](#)

MOOCs

A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is an interactive step-by-step course aimed at reaching an unlimited number of participants worldwide to create a community of lifelong learners. There are many different MOOC providers that cover a huge variety of different subject and topic interests.

Typically a MOOC will involve 2-3 hours study per week for 6 weeks or so. MOOCs are free of charge. All required course materials will be provided for you online, which is also 100% free! Each course is open to anyone with internet access across the world and all you need is your wonderful brain!

Here are a few that you may wish to try.



[Forensic psychology](#)



[Understanding depression and anxiety](#)



[Exploring sport coaching and psychology](#)

Trips

There are always lots of places you can visit to help stimulate your interest and knowledge in psychology. Here are a few suggestions.

The Freud Museum

Step into the world of Sigmund Freud, and see his iconic couch.

20 Maresfield Gardens, NW3 5SX,
Wed - Sun 12-5pm.



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.

The Museum of the Mind

The Bethlem Museum of the Mind records the lives and experiences of people with mental health problems.

Bethlem Royal Hospital, Beckenham, Kent
BR3 3BX. Weds-Fri 10am-5pm.



Your Summer Tasks!

To make sure you are fully prepared for A-level Psychology, you have some tasks to complete over the summer holiday.

- ✓ Complete your Cornell notes on two of the TED talks you have watched. (Do watch more, but you don't need to make notes on them unless you want to!)
- ✓ Read at least one of the suggested books and summarise what you learned from it.
- ✓ Watch at least one of the suggested films.
- ✓ We will be discussing the books and films when you come back in September, so make sure you don't forget what you have read and watched!
- ✓ If you fancy extending yourself, try a MOOC – there are plenty to choose from online.
- ✓ Visit the Freud Museum or attend a talk on psychology – lots of universities provide free events.
- ✓ Start to engage with and enjoy the world of psychology, starting with the ideas in this pack! It's fantastic, and we hope you enjoy your studies!

