



## **Greenwich Public Schools Curriculum Overview**

### **Introduction to Psychology**

Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

*Note: Teachers retain professional discretion in how the learning is presented based on the needs and interests of their students.*

### **Course Description**

Introduction to Psychology is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They examine major areas of interest such as experimental research, the biological basis of behavior, learning, development, personality, abnormal behavior, therapy and social interaction.

### **Unit Pacing Guide**

- Unit 1: Psychology as Science (approximately 12 classes)
- Unit 2: Biological Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
- Unit 3: Developmental Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
- Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
- Unit 5: Psychopathology (approximately 12 classes)

### **Enduring Understandings for the Course**

- Human behavior is influenced by a variety of biological, cognitive and social factors.
- Psychology is a scientific field of study that evolves through research and experimentation.

### **Unit 1: Psychology as Science**

- Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.
- Psychology provides insights and strategies that may be used to improve our personal and social well-being
- Psychology is a relatively young science that has evolved rapidly through the groundbreaking work of succeeding generations of psychologists.
- There are six main contemporary perspectives in psychology, each focusing on a different aspect or theory of human behavior.
- Psychological research is a rigorous scientific discipline that incorporates a variety of methods that must meet ethical standards for the treatment of participating subjects.

### **Unit 2: Biological Psychology**

- Innate biological factors and life experiences influence behavior; the extent to which they do and how they interact is an ongoing area of study in psychology.
- The nervous system is the body's electrochemical communication system to and from the brain.

- The endocrine system is the body's hormonal communication system to and from the brain.
- The brain is a highly complex organ with numerous specialized components; it is the command center of human behavior.
- The brain relies on the nervous and endocrine systems to receive information from and transmit commands to the various other parts of the body.

### **Unit 3: Developmental Psychology**

- The main stages of development are prenatal, childhood, adolescence and adulthood; within each there are sub-stages.
- Each stage has particular physical, cognitive and psychosocial characteristics.
- Early childhood is when the brain is most primed for learning and most requires engaged caregiving, language, play and good nutrition.
- Adolescence is characterized by psychological transitions in addition to and influenced by physical maturation.
- Socio-cultural cues shape adults' expectations for what to accomplish in life and when.
- Each stage of development presents particular psychological challenges to be resolved.

### **Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology**

- Learning is the relatively permanent change in behavior resulting from experience.
- Associative learning is the linking of: two stimuli or a response and its consequences. Cognitive learning is the acquisition of mental information that guides our behavior.
- Memory is the persistence of learning over time through the encoding, storage and retrieval of information
- Consciousness is the awareness of self and one's environment.
- Intelligence is the ability to learn from experience, solve problems, and use knowledge to adapt to new situations. The application and interpretation of this definition is a source of disagreement with important social implications.

### **Unit 5: Psychopathology**

- Psychological disorders are patterns of thoughts, feelings, or actions that are deviant, distressful, and dysfunctional.
- Psychological disorders negatively and severely interfere with one's daily life and well being.
- Therapies for psychological disorders include psychotherapy and biomedical.

### **Standards\***

\*There are no unique CT Psychology Standards. CT adheres to the American Psychological Association (APA) Standards, as do most states.

- **APA National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula**
  - Define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science
  - Differentiate scientific and non-scientific approaches to knowledge
  - Explain the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals
  - Describe research methods psychological scientists use
  - Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative research methods used by psychological scientists
  - Describe the importance of representative samples in psychological research and the need for replication

- Explain how and why psychologists use non-human animals in research
- Identify ethical requirements for research with human participants and non-human animals
- Explain how experiences shape attitudes and beliefs
- Explain how attitudes, biases, and beliefs affect behavior and relationships with others
- Explain how the presence of other people can affect behavior
- Describe how intergroup dynamics influence behavior
- Explain how persuasive methods affect behavior and beliefs
- Identify factors influencing attraction and relationships
- Identify factors influencing aggression and conflict
- Identify factors influencing altruism and helping behaviors
- Identify the major divisions and subdivisions of the human nervous system and their functions
- Identify the parts of the neuron and describe the basic process of neural transmission
- Describe the structures and functions of the various parts of the central nervous system
- Explain the importance of plasticity of the nervous system
- Describe the function of the endocrine glands and their interaction with the nervous system
- Identify methods and tools used to study the nervous system
- Describe concepts in behavioral genetics and epigenetics
- Describe the interactive effects of heredity and environment
- Explain the interaction of environmental and biological factors in development, including the role of the brain in all aspects of development
- Explain issues of continuity/discontinuity and stability/change
- Distinguish methods used to study development
- Describe the role of sensitive and critical periods in development
- Identify key features of physical development from prenatal through older adulthood
- Identify key features of cognitive development from prenatal through older adulthood
- Identify key features of social development from prenatal through older adulthood
- Explain how biological and environmental factors interact to influence personality
- Explain social-cognitive approaches to understanding personality
- Explain trait-based approaches to understanding personality
- Differentiate personality assessment techniques
- Describe the reliability and validity of personality assessment techniques
- Describe the visual sensory system
- Describe the auditory sensory system
- Describe the circadian rhythm and its relation to sleep
- Describe the sleep cycle
- Compare theories about the functions of sleep and of dreaming
- Explain intelligence as a construct
- Describe various conceptualizations of intelligence
- Describe the effects of differences in intelligence on everyday functioning
- Analyze the history of intelligence testing, including historical use and misuse in the context of fairness
- Identify current methods of assessing human cognitive abilities

- Describe measures of and data on reliability and validity for intelligence test scores
- Describe the processes of classical conditioning
- Describe clinical and experimental examples of classical conditioning
- Describe the processes of operant conditioning
- Describe clinical and experimental examples of operant conditioning
- Describe observational learning and social learning theory
- Describe the role of mental processes in learning
- Describe cross-cultural views of abnormality
- Describe major medical and biopsychosocial models of abnormality
- Describe the classification of psychological disorders
- Describe the challenges associated with diagnosing psychological disorders
- Describe symptoms of psychological disorders
- Describe different types of biomedical and psychological treatments
- Explain why psychologists use a variety of psychological treatments

- **National Social Studies Standards**

- Science, and its practical application, technology, have had a major influence on social and cultural change, and on the ways people interact with the world.
- There are many questions about the role that science and technology play in our lives and in our cultures.
- Personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout her or his development.
- Questions related to identity and development, which are important in psychology, sociology, and anthropology, are central to the understanding of who we are.
- The study of individual development and identity will help students to describe factors important to the development of personal identity.
- Through experience, observation, and reflection, students will identify elements of culture as well as similarities and differences among cultural groups across time and place.

- **Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies**

- Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.
- Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships between the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.
- Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating an understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
- By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.
- Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to *grades 11-12 texts and topics*.
- Analyze how the text structures information or ideas into categories or hierarchies, demonstrating understanding of the information or ideas.
- Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, identifying important issues that remain unresolved.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.
- Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

- By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### **Vision of the Graduate Connections**

- *Pose and pursue substantive questions.*  
-Students will develop and explore their own research questions during a variety of research assignments including development of the Capstone project and Grade 10 research paper.
- *Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information.*  
-Students will critically interpret, evaluate and synthesize information by analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources and by conducting historical research. This source evaluation and research will allow students to gain a variety of historical perspectives.
- *Explore, define, and solve complex problems.*  
-Students will apply historical knowledge to critically analyze current problems and issues. High school elective courses will allow for an in-depth study of many complex modern issues.
- *Communicate effectively for a given purpose.*  
-Students will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively through a variety of methods. Through persuasive writing assignments, class discussions and presentations, students will continue to develop and improve their communication skills.
- *Advocate for ideas, causes and action.*  
-Students will evaluate past advocacy successes and failures and determine when others have chosen to fight for causes and taken action. Case studies in *Law in America*, for example, will be used to evaluate advocacy successes and failures.
- *Generate innovative, creative ideas and products.*

- Students will demonstrate their mastery of curriculum objectives with innovative projects. Students will explore answers to essential questions through creative and varied assignments with research structured by the use of GPS research process.
- *Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding.*  
-Students will learn to collaborate with one another while working in structured groups in a variety of cooperative learning activities in order to create a final product.
- *Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership.*  
-Through the study of different world leaders and political systems, students gain the skills they need to evaluate the qualities of an effective leader. Through student council, community service requirements and other school organizations and responsibilities students will contribute to the community.
- *Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner.*  
-Historical situations will be analyzed so students gain perspective and information in order to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
- *Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view.*  
-Through the teaching of cultures from around the world students will recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view. By developing an understanding and empathy for others, students will appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- *Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities.*  
-Students will have choice in many assignments and will be able to pursue their interests culminating in the Capstone project.
- *Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience*  
-Students will reflect on their writing and group work, in order to analyze what they did well and where they can improve. Frequent and constructive feedback by teachers will be used to insure continuous reflection and refinement.
- *Be responsible for their own mental and physical health*  
-Social studies classes will help students develop study skills, and reduce stress through organization and planning.

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

### Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 11-12

#### Suggested Assessments

##### **Unit 1: Psychology as Science**

- Identify and describe important elements of psychology
- Explain how group dynamics influence individual behavior.
- Describe the origins of psychology as a science and the work of the first psychologists.
- Explain the six contemporary psychology perspectives.
- Compare the key characteristics, applications, advantages and disadvantages of different research strategies in psychology.

##### **Unit 2: Biological Psychology**

- Analyze how heredity interacts with the environment to influence behavior.
- Describe and explain the structure and functions of the nervous system.
- Describe and explain the structure and functions of the endocrine system.
- Evaluate the significance of these biological parts and systems in human behavior.

**Unit 3: Developmental Psychology**

- Identify, explain, and distinguish the psychological stages of the human life span.
- Describe why early childhood is critical in a person's psychological development.
- Explain why psychologists identify adolescence as a distinct stage of development.
- Analyze how adult behavior is influenced by the social clock.
- Evaluate what psychological challenges are particular to each stage.

**Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology**

- Compare and contrast the associative and cognitive modes of learning.
- Analyze learning as a set of complex and varied processes for acquiring behaviors, knowledge and skills.
- Define memory and explain how it works and why it is important.
- Define consciousness and how our information processing affects our reality.
- Define intelligence and assess its merits in real world application

**Unit 5: Psychopathology**

- Identify the criteria used to classify psychological disorders.
- Compare the impact various disorders have on individual and social well-being.
- Identify and apply therapies for psychological disorders.

**REQUIRED SOURCES:****Unit 1: Psychology as Science**

- APA Ethical Guidelines, Standard 8

**Unit 2: Biological Psychology**

- "Nature vs. Nurture? It's Both," reading

**Unit 3: Developmental Psychology**

- "Perspectives on Parenting: The Essence of Piaget," *Pediatrics for Parents*, 2013

**Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology**

- "Why Sleep is Important," APA article

**Unit 5: Psychopathology**

- DSM-5: Intro and Brief History