

AP Psychology Booklist

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**Book choices are not limited to this list. This is a preliminary list. Email cindy.delgiorno@redclay.k12.de.us to suggest additions and get approval for others.*

** Some books can be found in a public library or all can be purchased from any good bookstore.*

History of Psychology

Forty Studies that Changed Psychology

by Roger Hock

- Roger Hock recounts and illuminates forty of the most elegant and influential studies that have shaped our understanding of human behavior during psychology's brief past.

Opening Skinner's Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century

by Lauren Slater

- "Through ten examples of ingenious experiments by some of the psychology's most innovative thinkers, Lauren Slater traces the evolution of the century's most pressing concerns – free will, authoritarianism, conformity, and morality."

The Social Animal

by Elliot Aronson

- Excellent introduction to social psychology, including conformity, mass communication, propaganda, persuasion, aggression prejudice, attraction, and loving.

Theories

Freud for Beginners

By Richard Appignanesi

- A perfect introduction to the life and thought of the man whose discovery of psychoanalysis revolutionized our attitudes towards mental illness, religion, sex, and culture. This documentary cartoon book plunges us into the world of late-nineteenth-century Vienna in which Freud grew up. We explore his early background in science, his work as a therapist, his encounter with cocaine, and his theories on the unconscious, dreams, the Oedipus Complex, and sexuality.

Man's Search for Meaning

By Viktor E. Frankl

- Based on his own experience and the experiences of those he treated in his practice, Frankl argues that we cannot avoid suffering but we can choose how to cope with it, find meaning in it, and move forward with renewed purpose. Frankl's theory—known as logotherapy, from the Greek word logos ("meaning")—holds that our primary drive in life is not pleasure, as Freud maintained, but the discovery and pursuit of what we personally find meaningful.

Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes

By L. S. Vygotsky

- The mind, Vygotsky argues, cannot be understood in isolation from the surrounding society. Man is the only animal who uses tools to alter his own inner world as well as the world around him.

Evolutionary Psychology

Evolutionary Explanations of Human Behavior

By J. Cartwright

- Deals with three main areas: human reproductive behavior, evolutionary explanations of mental disorders and the evolution of intelligence and the brain.

Introducing Evolutionary Psychology

By Dylan Evans

- Using evolutionary biology and cognitive psychology as well as anthropology, primatology and archaeology, characters such as Dawkins, Gould and Dennett are beginning to piece together the first truly scientific account of human nature.

Biology and Behavior

Entwined Lives

By Nancy Segal

a wealth of research from the fields of behavioral genetics, evolutionary psychology and social science.

Identical Strangers: A Memoir of Twins Separated and Reunited

By Elyse Schein and Paula Bernstein

the authors spearhead their own research project by poring over birth records, tracking down their birth mother's brother and interviewing researchers, who claim that twins raised apart are more similar than those raised together.

One and the Same: My life as an identical twin and what I've learned about everyone's struggle to be singular

By Abigail Pogrebin

a terrific travelogue through the world of identical--and fraternal--twins.

Pogrebin brings heart and brains to her own experiences with her twin sister Robin, from infancy to a ripe maturity. And she has done prodigious amount of research, speaking with scores of twins--together and apart--and interviewing dozens of experts on all aspects of the twin experience.

Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain

by Oliver Sacks

- Oliver Sacks's compassionate, compelling tales of people struggling to adapt to different neurological conditions have fundamentally changed the way we think of our own brains, and of the human experience. In Musicophilia, he examines the powers of music through the individual experiences of patients, musicians, and everyday people.

Receptors

by R.M. Restak

- Thorough and readable exploration of synapses and neurotransmitters and their links to drugs, moods, behavior, personality and mental illness.

The man who mistook his wife for a hat

by Oliver Sacks

- Tells the stories of individuals afflicted with fantastic perceptual and intellectual aberrations: patients who have lost their memories and with them the greater part of their pasts; who are no longer able to recognize people and common objects; who are stricken with violent tics and grimaces or who should involuntarily obscenities; whose limbs have become alien; who have been dismissed as retarded yet are gifted with uncanny artistic or mathematical talents.

The Science of Happiness: How Our Brains Make Us Happy and What We Can Do to be Happier

By Stefan Klein

- Now, in *The Science of Happiness*, leading science journalist Stefan Klein ranges widely across the latest frontiers of neuroscience and psychology to explain how happiness is generated in our brains, what biological purpose it serves, and the conditions required to foster the "pursuit of happiness."

Sensation and Perception

The Scent of Desire: Discovering Our Enigmatic Sense of Smell

By Rachel Herz

- Herz explores the relationships between scent, emotion and behavior, emphasizing that scent is an important component of sexual attraction and thus crucial for the survival of our species

Consciousness

Sleep Thieves: an eye opening exploration into the science

by S. Coren

- The need for sleep is real. An obvious conclusion for a book on sleep and surely (yawn), something we already know? Coren gives us the wake up call - most of us know very little about sleep, including our own. It is only recently that researchers have shown the damage sleep deprivation causes.

The Interpretation of Dreams

By Sigmund Freud

- Introducing the id, the superego, and their problem child, the ego, Freud advanced scientific understanding of the mind immeasurably by exposing motivations normally invisible to our consciousness.

Learning

Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys

by Dan Kindlon

- The emphasis of male experience and the cruelty of boys to one another. Stories of boys interacting with one another including mother and fathers. Also, daughters interacting with mothers and fathers and other girls of their ages.

Supermanny: How to Get the Best From Your Children

By Jo Frost

- She offers her "top ten rules" for setting boundaries, managing mealtimes, even surviving toilet training, and it's mostly rock-solid, and peppered liberally with British wit

Cognition

How the mind works

by S. Pinker

- Wide ranging discussion of how we process information.

Learned optimism

by M.E.P. Seligman

- Highly regarded book on optimism, pessimism, and positive thinking based on research and theory in cognitive psychology. The author believes optimism and pessimism are learned explanatory styles.

Prisoners of Hate: The Cognitive Basis of Anger, Hostility, and Violence

By Aaron T. Beck

- Noted as the founder of cognitive psychotherapy, Beck (emeritus, Pennsylvania State Univ.) here applies his work to greater social problems, from domestic violence to bigotry, crime, and war.

Memory

Witness for the defense: the accused, the eyewitness, and the expert who puts memory on trial

by E. and K. Ketcham Loftus

- Lively, personal, and informative examination of the eight court cases that centered on disputed eyewitness identifications in the light of what psychology has to tell us about human memory.

Motivation and Emotion

How we know what isn't so: the fallibility of human reason in everyday life

by T. Gilovich

- An excellent and readable summary of the major difficulties people have in reasoning well, with a wealth of everyday examples.

Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape our Decisions

by Dan Ariely

- Dan Ariely refutes the common assumption that we behave in fundamentally rational ways. Blending everyday experience with groundbreaking research, Ariely explains how expectations, emotions, social norms, and other invisible, seemingly illogical forces skew our reasoning abilities.

The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less

By Barry Schwartz

- We normally assume in America that more options ("easy fit" or "relaxed fit"?) will make us happier, but Schwartz shows the opposite is true, arguing that having all these choices actually goes so far as to erode our psychological well-being. Part research summary, part introductory social sciences tutorial, part self-help guide, this book offers concrete steps on how to reduce stress in decision making.

The balance within: The science connecting health and emotions

By E.M. Sternberg

- Recent review of what is known about the "mind-body connection" and its implications for mainstream and alternative medicine.

Intelligence

Creating minds

by H. Gardner

- Applies the theory of multiple intelligences to understanding creativity in such people as Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, T.S. Eliot, Martha Graham, and Mahatma Gandhi.

Social Intelligence

by Daniel Goleman

- Goleman explained that research into neuroscience was exploding, and that researchers had recently discovered biological, chemical and structural aspects of the brain that correspond to fluency in social interactions. When people strongly connect in social situations, the chemical activity in each person's brain actually synchs up with the other participants'. This causes a ripple effect throughout the body, causing greater and greater physiological connections.

Why Smart People Can be So Stupid

by Robert Sternberg

- Attempts to understand the psychological basis of stupidity. They succeed admirably, and while doing so, reveal the limitations of our field's traditional and rather narrow models of intelligence. By revealing the many ways in which smart people behave maladaptively and the social conditions that give rise to such bungling, the contributors to his volume stimulate new direction for theory, research, and practice with respect to human intelligence.

Wisdom, Intelligence, and Creativity Synthesized

by Robert Sternberg

- Sternberg critically reviews and summarized the best research available on human intelligence. He argues that any serious understanding of intelligence must go beyond the standard paper and pencil tests currently in use. Intelligence must also account for wisdom and creativity.

Language Development

Genie: A Scientific Tragedy

by Russ Rymer

- In the process of telling the poignant story of one desperately unfortunate little girl, raises profound questions about both the origins of language and the ultimate source of what we call 'human nature.' At once a scientific detective story and an examination of professional ethics.

The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature

By Steven Pinker

- According to the Harvard psychologist, people are "verbivores, a species that lives on words." If you want to understand how the brain works, how it thinks about space and causation and time, how it processes emotions and engages in social interactions, then you need to plunge "down the rabbit hole" of language. The quirks of our sentences are merely a portal to the mind.

Human Development Across the Life Span

.Brain Rules for Baby: How to Raise a Smart and Happy Child from Zero to Five

By John Medina

- bridges the gap between what scientists know and what parents practice. Through fascinating and funny stories, Medina, a developmental molecular biologist and dad, unravels how a child's brain develops--and what you can do to optimize it.

Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls

by Rachel Simmons

- A wake up call to all of us who care deeply about girls' development. Simmons has given voice to the girls who struggle every day with friends. She has uncovered a hidden world of aggression that unfolds behind adults' backs.

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Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls

by Mary Pipher, PhD

- Dr. Mary Pipher discusses the social and cultural pressures faced by today's adolescent girls. She analyzes the case histories of her young patients in an attempt to understand them and make recommendations for change. She explains why girls suffer from eating disorders, the desire to hurt or even kill themselves, friction with their parents, and problems in school. Dr. Pipher discusses the changes that occur when girls enter adolescence. Her observations provide valuable insight into the reasons why many confident, well-adjusted girls suddenly become sad and angry.

Personality Theory

Childhood and Society

By Erik H. Erikson

- Containing accounts of the author's field work among Sioux and Yurok Indians, and an examination of the American, German and Russian characters, this is an interpretation of human life on psychological lines

Galen's prophecy: Temperament in human nature

by J. Kagan

- Evidence for inborn personality temperaments, specifically the evidence that some children are born inhibited and others are born uninhibited and the implication of this for understanding shyness and other personality traits.

Identity: youth and crisis

by E. Erikson

- Classic study of the personality and social development of adolescents.

The High Price of Materialism

by Tim Kasser

- “Drawing on a decades worth of empirical data, Kasser examines what happens when we organize our lives around materialistic pursuits. He looks at the effects on our internal experience and interpersonal relationships, as well as on our communities and the world at large. He shows that materialistic values actually undermined our well-being, as they perpetuate feelings of insecurity, weaken the ties that bind us, and make us feel less free. Kasser not only defines the problem but proposes ways we can change ourselves, our families, and society to become less materialistic.”

Psychological Disorders

A Million Little Pieces

by James Frey

- It tells the story of a 23-year-old alcoholic and drug abuser and how he copes with rehabilitation in a [Twelve Steps](#)-oriented treatment center.

An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness

by Dr. Kay R. Jamison

- “Dr. Ray Redfield Jamison is one of the foremost authorities on manic-depressive illness. She also experienced it firsthand. For even while she was pursuing her career in academic medicine, Jamison found herself succumbing to the same exhilaration highs and catastrophic depressions that afflicted many of her patients.”

Social Psychology

Aggression: its causes, consequences, and control

by L. Berkowitz

- “Overview of what science tells us about aggression. Includes discussion of violence-prone personalities, domestic violence, gun control, violence in media, and control of aggression.”

How we know what isn't so: the fallibility of human reason in everyday life

by T. Gilovich

- An excellent and readable summary of the major difficulties people have in reasoning well, with a wealth of everyday examples.

Influence: the psychology of persuasion

by R.B. Cialdini

- Best selling book on six basic principles of influence and persuasion. Readable, engaging account of what psychology has to tell us about selling and marketing, persuasion, and influence.

Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View

By Stanley Milgram

- In the 1960s, Stanley Milgram carried out a series of experiments in which human subjects were given progressively more painful electro-shocks in a careful calibrated series to determine to what extent people will obey orders even when they knew them to be painful and immoral - to determine how people will obey authority regardless of consequences. These experiments came under heavy criticism at the time but have ultimately been vindicated by the scientific community. This book is Milgram's vivid and persuasive explanation of his methods.

Stranger in the Nest

by D.B. Cohen

- Do parents really shape their child's personality, intelligence or character? Account of the extent to which biology and prenatal influences affect human development, and a discussion of the social and moral implications of those influences.

The design of everyday things

by D. Norman

- Introduction to the relationship between psychology and product design, one of the many professions you might not have realized were open to graduates in psychology.

The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil

by Philip Zimbardo

- Zimbardo summarizes more than 30 years of research on factors that can create a "perfect storm" which leads good people to engage in evil actions. This transformation of human character is what he call the "[Lucifer Effect](#)," named after God's favorite angel, Lucifer, who fell from grace and ultimately became Satan.

The Psychology of Hate

by Robert Sternberg

- "This past APA president and editor of Contemporary Psychology introduces 11 views by US colleagues on the nature of hate: its conceptualization, role in racism and violence, assessment, and ways to combat it. Aaron Beck, the founder of cognitive therapy, observes that disproportionate thoughts of being wronged trigger emotions in individuals and nations that can be change... A provocative examination of genocide differentiates hatred from dehumanization."