

# ***PSYCHOLOGY***

**2003-2004 COURSE OUTLINE**

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## **def. *PSYCHOLOGY*: the scientific study of human and animal behavior and mental processes**

How often do you feel that you are really *personally involved* in a subject that you are studying in school? Well, prepare to be, because unlike many other fields of study, the Psychology portion of this course is first and foremost about *you*. Psychology will help you understand why you and others act as they do, at different times and in different situations. In this course you will develop new ways of thinking about yourself, others, and problems important to you and our society. In addition to the course outcomes, students will develop the following skills in Psychology:

- Develop a beginning knowledge base. Learn basic facts, concepts, and historical developments in psychology. Understand psychological arguments on both sides of psychological issues. Identify the various branches of psychology and their unique assumptions.
- Learn how to ask questions. Learn how to ask the kinds of questions that psychologists ask.
- Learn how psychologists answer questions. See what constitutes a good argument in psychology. Appreciate how psychologists conduct research, and how they use experimental data.
- Begin to understand why psychologists sometimes disagree. Understand why they may disagree both on the kinds of questions that are appropriate and on the kinds of answers they seek.
- Apply psychological thinking to issues in your daily life. Look for insights from each area of psychology that can lead to increased personal awareness and opportunities for personal growth.

### **Materials**

Our main source in Psychology is the textbook *Psychology and You*, by Judith W. McMahon and Tony Romano. (West/Thomson, 2000). There will also be a variety of supplementary readings and a focus on current psychological issues, using articles from newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. You will find the Social Studies web site, [www.geocities.com/socialstudiesjhs](http://www.geocities.com/socialstudiesjhs), especially useful to expand on your learning.

### **Activities**

Oral and written reports, group and individual projects, paper-and-pencil quizzes and tests, homework, and other assignments will assess whether students have met the course outcomes. You will also be required to keep a journal, focused around the discussion of topics in Psychology, for the duration of the course. Five percent of each marking period grade will be made up of the Real World assignment (see separate sheet). A final exam will be given at the end of the term.

## **Course of Study\***

1. *What is Psychology?* (Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2) What is psychology? What do psychologists do? What are different approaches to studying human behavior?
2. *Personality and Mental Health* (Chapters 14-17) What are the essential elements that make you you? How can you help achieve a healthy personality?
3. *Psychological Disorders* (Chapters 17-18) Understanding psychological disorders and different approaches to their treatment.
4. *Learning, Memory, and Intelligence* (Chapters 7-9) How do people learn? We will look at several theories, including behaviorism.
5. *Consciousness* (Chapter 6) Waking, sleeping, dreaming, and more: the study of our conscious and unconscious minds
6. *Sensation & Perception* (Chapter 4, parts of 3) In this unit we will look at how the brain, sensory organs, and body interact. What your brain *thinks* you see, hear, and do might surprise you.
7. *Development* (parts of Chapters 10-13) Psychologists have different theories about what factors are most important in influencing our development during all stages of our lives. We will look at several of these, and see what it's like (kind of) to take care of an infant ourselves.
8. *Motivation & Emotion* (Chapter 5) Why do you do what you do? Why are certain feelings connected with your actions and those of others?

\*Tentative: The order of these units may change, with some topics of study be dependent on student choice. The senior internship program will curtail the second semester Psychology curriculum for some students.