

AP Psychology - Summer Assignment

AP Psychology Students 2024-25:

Welcome to AP Psychology. Psychology is the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. Behavior is what you do. Mental processes include all of the things that go on in your mind: thinking, memory, emotions, decision making, sensory perception, language, you get the idea. I am excited that you have chosen to challenge yourself with this AP course, and I hope you will find it relevant and applicable to your personal life. You will receive two homework grades for completing each of the following assignments before school starts.

Assignment #1- Allow Me to Introduce Myself (15 pts)

This assignment is designed for me to get to know you prior to the school year. In addition, this personal response will help you to start thinking about your self-concept and ideal self which will be discussed in class. Please write a thoughtful response using **correct grammar, complete sentences, and paragraph form**. This is a professional communication similar to what you would use with a college professor or employer. Complete the assignment below and email it to me anytime this summer before the first day of school, Monday, August 12th at laura.gamard@stmichaelchs.org or share it on google classroom using the code: <https://classroom.google.com/c/NjcwNTIOMzM1NTYy?cjc=fjumg5p>

Introduce yourself:

- Tell me about your family.
- Tell me about you as a person? What are some adjectives that describe you? What do you see as your strengths? What about areas where there is room for improvement?
- How would you describe yourself as a student? What are your academic strengths and areas in need of improvement?
- How do you feel about being a student at St. Michael? What do you like/dislike about high school?
- What are your hobbies? What do you like to do for fun?
- What extracurricular activities are you involved in or planning to be involved in?
- Is there any cause or activity that you feel particularly passionate about?
- Do you have a job? What is it? Do you like it?
- What are your goals or plans for post-high school? Where might you like to attend college and what are some majors and careers that interest you?
- Why are you taking AP Psychology? What are you looking forward to in this class?
- What areas of psychology interest you?

- Are you enrolled in other AP courses? Have you taken other AP courses throughout your high school career?
- Is there anything else that I should know about you so that I have insight into you as a person before the next school year begins?

Assignment #2 – “TED, Talk To Me.” (20 pts.)

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to spreading ideas in short, powerful talks of 18 minutes or less. TED is an acronym for Technology, Entertainment, and Design. Read the title of the Ted Talks below and choose **two** talks that sound interesting to you. After watching each lecture, write a **two** paragraph summary. One of these paragraphs will be your summary of the talk and the other will be your personal reaction to the talk. The assignment is posted on google classroom and you may turn in your responses (2 total) electronically or print them out. You may find the talks on YouTube. Summaries are due the first day of class, **Monday, August 12th**.

- Elyn Saks: A Tale of Mental Illness
- Elizabeth Loftus: How Reliable is Your Memory
- Keith Barry: Brain Magic
- Angela Lee Duckworth: The Key to Success – Grit
- Dan Gilbert: Surprise Science of Happiness
- Ben Ambridge: Ten Myths About Psychology Debunked
- Susan Cain: Power of Introverts
- Amy Cuddy: Body Language Shapes Who You Are
- Pamela Meyer: How to Spot a Liar
- Philip Zimbardo: The Psychology of Evil
- John McWhorter: Texting is Killing Language, JK

Assignment #3 – *Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness* by Susannah Cahalan (30 pts.)

Available from a past student, amazon, any local book store, or the library.

Brain on Fire is the autobiographical account of a young journalist who contracts a rare autoimmune neurological disorder and loses her mind. It is a fascinating look at how the brain works and what makes us who we are. There are so many psychological aspects covered by this book, and we will be able to relate back to it over most areas of content that we study in AP Psychology.

As you read, pay attention to the brain structures and neurotransmitters that are affected by the illness. Also be aware of Susannah's symptoms, the details of her recovery, how it affects her family and ultimately changes her life.

There will be a reading quiz on Wednesday, August 14th. You will also participate in a discussion of the book so that I will know whether or not you read it.

Read the book. Do NOT watch the movie. The movie is very different from the book and not very good.

Not knowing that you were going to be assigned to AP Psychology will not be an excuse for not reading this book. As soon as you get your schedule, you are required to complete this assignment. There will be no exceptions. The book is fascinating and essential to the course.