Year 12 Summer Work

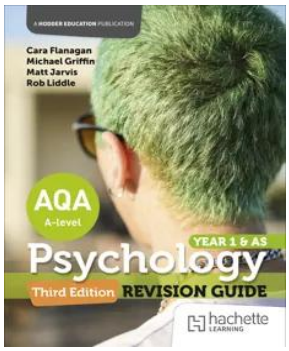
Welcome, you have now started a journey into a new subject. We hope that the journey is enjoyable and successful. How far you will go on that journey will largely depend on your interest and motivation. **'Psychological literacy'** is a term that describes being able to talk and think about psychological theories and ideas. This ability comes from reading/watching/listening for pleasure. In one study, Christy Whitten et al (2016) found that students who read for pleasure averaged higher grades than non-reading students.

We have provided a range of suggestions for you below. However, you are free to choose any topic or area of psychology that interests you, not necessarily from the list. **We do recommend that you read at least one book. We would like you to keep a journal of what you do.** You can use words, images, notes, mind maps and summaries to record your explorations. Ideally this will be recorded electronically so that you can update it throughout your two-year journey. Student examples have also been provided below.

Please submit your journal to us in your first lesson back with either Mr Stidever or Mrs Vin D'Arc in September. We look forward to meeting you.

What resources do I need for class?

The following textbooks cover the first year of the course and will be needed for your first lesson.



Available from: https://www.hachettelearning.com/psychology/aqa-psychology-for-a-level-year-1-and-as-third-edition Price £18.99

And:

Digital

AQA Psychology for A level: Book 1 Third Edition Boost eBook

- **Published:**27th June 2025
- **ISBN:**9781036013066

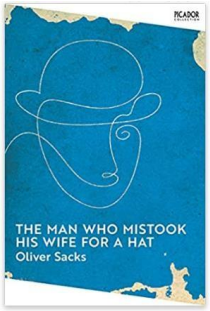
1 Year Access

£8.50

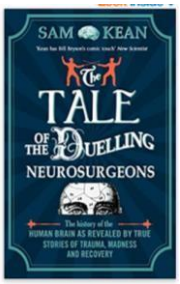
per license

Recommended Summer Reading

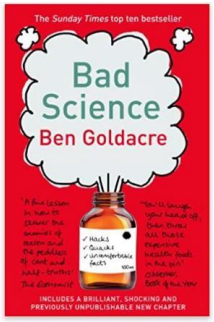
The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat: Oliver Sacks



Dr. Oliver Sacks recounts the stories of patients struggling to adapt to often bizarre worlds of neurological disorder. Here are people who can no longer recognize everyday objects or those they love.



The Tale of the Duelling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery: Sam Kean

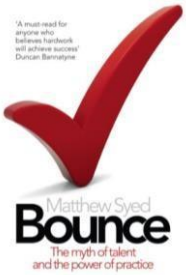


For centuries, scientists had only one way to study the brain: wait for misfortune to strike - strokes, seizures, infections, lobotomies, horrendous accidents, phantom limbs, Siamese twins - and see how the victims changed afterwards. In many cases their survival was miraculous, and observers marvelled at the transformations that took place when different parts of the brain were destroyed.

Bad Science and Bad Pharma: Ben Goldacre . This book will open your eyes to what is wrong with much popular so-called research and give you a clearer idea of what science is all about.

Bounce:

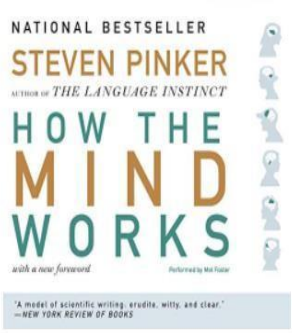
Matthew Syed



An easy read about dealing with failure and achievement, the myth of talent and the power of practice.

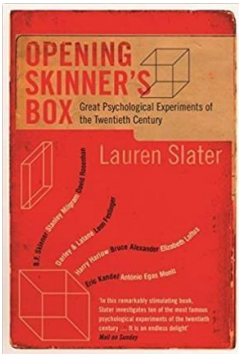
The Psychopath Test:

Jon Ronson



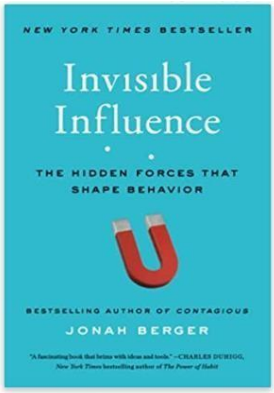
How the mind works: Steven Pinker

Why do memories fade? Why do we lose our tempers? Why do fools fall in love? Why do we pursue higher callings like art, religion and philosophy? This is an advanced read written by a world expert.



Opening Skinner's Box: Lauren Slater

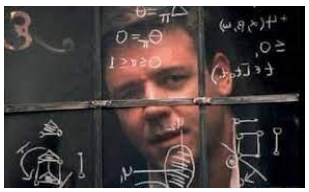
A detailed look at ten classic studies including Loftus, Milgram and Rosenhan. There have been criticisms of some of Slater's claims but it is an interesting read.



Invisible Influence: Jonah Berger

Without realising it, other people's behaviour has a huge influence on everything we do at every moment of our lives, from the mundane to the momentous. You wear a certain jacket because you liked how it looked. You picked A level subjects because you found them interesting. The notion that our choices are driven by our own personal thoughts and opinions is patently obvious. Right? Wrong! This book is a great foundation for our first topic of study in September - social influence.

Recommended Watching and Listening

Watch **TED Talks** 	**How reliable is your memory? by Elizabeth Loftus.** Psychologist Elizabeth Loftus studies memories. More precisely, she studies false memories, when people either remember things that didn't happen or remember them differently from the way they really were. It's more common than you might think. How reliable is your memory? Elizabeth Loftus 	**The Psychology of Tyranny: Did Milgram Get It Wrong? by Alex Haslam.** Professor Alex Haslam's work reviews the famous Milgram's experiment to show how tyranny and obedience actually work. His talk explores current thinking around the psychology of tyranny centering on an interrogation of the conclusions derived from Milgram's 'obedience to authority' research. Did Milgram Get It Wrong? Alex Haslam TEDx 	**The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil by Philip Zimbardo.** This clip contains graphic images of violence - tortured and humiliated prisoners from the Iraq war. Zimbardo became known for his 1971 Stanford prison experiment but has since been asking a broader question in terms of 'The Lucifer effect' – what causes people to go evil? Philip Zimbardo: The psychology of evil TED Talk
Watch **Movies** 	**A Beautiful Mind (2001)** Based on the life of mathematical genius John Nash who experienced a schizophrenic breakdown. 	**Good Will Hunting (1997)** The main character experienced abuse and privation as a child and the film shows how he comes to realise his full potential. 	**Three Identical Strangers (2018)** A documentary about identical triplet brothers adopted as infants by separate families reveals how their adoption had been part of a scientific "nature versus nurture" study.

Listen BBC Radio 4	**All in the Mind (presented by Claudia Hammond)** Current developments in psychology revisiting popular ideas. Over 200 episodes available here: BBC Radio 4 All in the Mind	**Mind Changers (also presented by Claudia Hammond)** Bringing classic theory and studies to life through audio discussion: BBC SOUNDS BBC Sounds - Mind Changers - Available Episodes	**The Life Scientific (presented by Jim-Al-Khalili)** Gives a sense of how people developed their careers and what it is like to be a scientist, which often includes psychologists: BBC Radio 4 The Life Scientific

A student example of their summer work …

Psychology personal development record

Date finished	Type of Documentation - Title	Explorations
10/07/21	Book - It's all in your head by Suzanne O'Sullivan	- It's all in your head by Suzanne O'Sullivan is a book in which she talks about her past experiences in diagnosing patients with psychosomatic disorders. - The book focuses on the medical industry and the often falsely diagnosed diagnoses used instead of psychosomatic disorders. - It looks at society's views on psychosomatic illnesses and the physical symptoms that stem from the mind as an almost distraction from trauma or past events. - Psychosomatic refers to any physical symptom that can't be explained by a disease and is suspected to have a psychological cause. - However to say that a person has a psychosomatic disorder is not a specific diagnosis and is an umbrella term filled with many other diagnoses. - Medically unexplained symptoms is what the medical community uses to refer to symptoms that are thought to be stress related and which cannot be explained by any physical disease. - Psychogenic is used to refer to symptoms where there is a strong chance that they have come around in the mind from the results of stress or psychological upset. - People diagnosed with psychosomatic disorders are often very unwilling to accept this diagnosis because their pain feels so real and when you are told it's all in your head they often believe that they are being told that their pain isn't real. This however is not the case. - These psychosomatic disorders can cause normally healthy people to have headaches, seizures and even in some cases causes people to become paralysed. - People who suffer from psychosomatic disorders often do not feel believed, their suffering is real but because there is nothing wrong with their

Date	Activity	Details	What did I learn/gain?
27th October 2020	TED Talk	Exploring the Mind of a Killer (Jim Fallon)	Looking at the neuroscience of convicted killers. Using PET scans it was clear that all serial killers had damage to their orbital cortex, they all had some form of brain damage and a variant of the MAOA-gene. In order to express this gene, in a violent way, most serial killers had experienced trauma in their childhoods – the role of nature and nurture in aggression/violence.
26th October 2021	TED Talk	Who are you really, the puzzle of personality. (Brian Little)	I realised from the Ted Talk the noticeable traits of extroverts and introverts. How an extrovert will be in the centre of action whilst an introvert will take a bit of space away from the stimulation they are surrounded by. I found it fascinating (as an extrovert) that when meeting someone new extroverts will be quick to nickname. The example in the Ted Talk was when someone introduced themselves at "Charles" it rapidly became "Charlie" and then "Chuck" whilst introverts will maintain the name Charles until invited to refer to them differently. This was very fascinating to me as from my own life it is true as I did the same when meeting people for the first time.
20th February 2022	BPS video	Forensic psychology	Involves the psychological aspects of legal processes in court. It is used to modify offender behaviour, responding to the new demand of staff and prisoners as well as maintaining the mental health of staff and prisoners, undertaking statistical analysis for prisoner profiling. The assess offenders and design and run therapys to attempt to make sure they don't offend

Type	Title	Notes

Video (TEDTalk)	Phillip Zimbardo: The psychology of evil	• The line between good and bad people is not fixed, good people can be easily strayed by evil
		• Evil: The exercise of power to intentionally cause harm, hurt, destruction and/or commit crimes against humanity
		• How psychologists understand transformations of human character:
		  ○ Dispositional: Inside of Individuals: The Bad Apples - this idea is the foundation of evil people and social sciences
		  ○ Situational: External: The Bad Barrel - this is the dependency of external factors and the relevant situation
		  ○ Systematic: Broad Influences: political, economic, legal, power: The Bad Barrel-makers - this is how power and systems corrupt the individual
		• The "Lucifer Effect" celebrates the infinite capacity to make us behave kindly or cruelly
		• 7 social processes that can lead to evil:
		  ○ Mindlessly taking the first small step
		  ○ Dehumanization
		  ○ De-individualisation of self (anonymity)
		  ○ Diffusion of personal responsibility
		  ○ Blind obedience to authority
		  ○ Uncritical conformity to group norms
		  ○ Passive tolerance of evil through inaction or indifference
		  ○ New or unfamiliar situations
		• Hence, good people can be transformed without drug use
		• The line between god and evil exists within us, it is a decision that one must make
		• The same situation that can fuel the desire to be a perpetrator of evil can also inspire the heroic imagination in others
		• The evil of inaction is being a bystander in a moment of need
		• To be a hero, one must act when others are passive

Podcast (Mind Changers)	B.F Skinner and Superstition in the Pigeon	• B.F Skinner
		  ○ He was very impactful in the psychology field yet controversial
		  ○ He stood for behaviorship - the idea that behavior is impacted by the environment
		• "The more one is rewarded the stronger the behaviour/response is performed" is not correct
		  ○ Animals can form "superstitious" patterns of behaviour
		  ○ The animal would perform something that is unrelated to the task but correlated with being rewarded
		• Skinner said behaviour could be predicted and controlled
		  ○ However, this was not the case with certain animals