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Name: _____

******Important!!** All readings and other related materials can be found *online* on the **GCHS website**—click on: the summer assignments for AP Psych. Make sure you click on Miller’s summer assignment as Mr. Bullard’s is very different.

Greetings AP Psychology students! I hope that you are looking forward to working really hard – and having some fun – next school year. Through doing both, I guarantee that you will experience a lot of learning. Interestingly enough, I designed this course to make sure you do just that! My goals are not only to make sure that you do well on the AP exam, but also to make sure that you never see or experience your world the same way ever again. *We will substantively alter your understanding of yourself and those around you.* Like I said, we (you) will need to work very, very (very) hard to accomplish this. But I promise that in return, you will be served a lifetime of our learning in action. To begin our journey, you need to complete a three-part summer assignment. **While all of these parts are due on the first Friday of 1st semester (even though this class is 2nd semester).**

Important!!

Failure to turn in even **one** of these assignments will result in a zero/120 **for all of them**, which will be “shown” as the first grade in each of the first three marking periods.

Please also note that you will earn an **automatic zero for any part that is incomplete**. In other words, incomplete work is not deemed “whole” and will not be given a “partial grade” - you will earn a zero for it (as is expected in university).

Got it? Good! Please initial the sheet being passed around acknowledging your receipt of these assignments and verifying that you understand the above two bullet points.

Summer Assignment, part A: “What is Psychology?” Paper

Adapted from Mr. Galusha’s AP Psychology summer assignment, Weymouth HS, Weymouth, MA

For your first summer assignment, you have an opportunity to, “...start at the very beginning”. In a minimum of 1,000 words (around 3-4 pages) you need to analyze and answer the question, **“What is Psychology?”**

Now I know, AP Psychology is probably one of those classes you might’ve put on your schedule without quite knowing what you were taking. When you selected US History, you pretty much knew what you were going to learn. With Psychology, it might be a bit fuzzier, so let’s add some clarity before we go any further. *Psychology is the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes.* Since this short definition packs quite a punch, let us break it down into its three assertions.

First, this definition clearly declares that Psychology *is* a science. While you might be getting a social studies credit for this class, **trust me, it’s a science** (you are indeed taking a science course in the social 2

studies department). Psychology uses the scientific method to carefully craft creative experiments and meticulously compute complex data. Psychology commands that you have an intricate understanding of our brain, our nervous and endocrine systems, how they are interconnected and how this biology affects our behavior. Psychology might not boast the “exactness” of physics or chemistry, but really, when is the last time an electron created an emotional memory from an experiment, or a particle had a bizarre dream? Psychologists study things that are much, much more complex – humans – and we do our scientific best with the subject we are analyzing.

Second, this definition alerts you to the fact that psychologists study human behavior. This is good since if you’re going to use the scientific method in an attempt to understand people, you had better be able to actually *observe* what you’re talking about. Behavior is certainly something you can observe. From a child’s temper tantrum to an adult’s body language during a first date, psychologists use human behavior as data points for their research and hopefully that research helps explain, or even predict, future behaviors.

Third, but certainly not least, psychology is the study of mental processes. Have you ever texted while walking, and thought “how did I get here?” Maybe you had a really wild dream last night...did you ever think about why? It’s seventh period and you’re thinking about your afternoon, but you’re still nodding along with your teacher’s lecture as if you were listening? Well, that’s the type of behavior vs. mental process disparity you’ll be analyzing. Human behavior is really only half the equation - mental processes make up the other half.

This presents a problem, though. You can’t *see* thoughts, and as scientists, if we can’t observe it, we can’t study it, right? Well . . . this would be the case if psychologists didn’t have access to two important things: brain imaging tools and imagination. Tools like fMRIs and PET scans help psychologists see the inner workings of the human mind, while wonderfully and creatively designed experiments help us gain access to what would otherwise be a black box. Armed with these two, psychologists can mine the inner workings of mental processes.

Now, you may be thinking that I’ve just written your first summer assignment for you - copy paste and you’re all set. Of course, you are *wrong*. While you’ll find an overarching agreement among contemporary psychologists on these three points, you will see that there are many *types* of answers that different psychologists use to explain their underlying causes. These different answers are a result of differing approaches to Psychology. Think of approaches as different “lenses” you can wear to study psychology. For example, if you approach psychology from a biological perspective you might ask questions about how a person’s biology determines their behavior. If you approach psychology from a social perspective you might try to explain a person’s behavior by looking at how others may have influenced it. These different “lenses” help to create the questions and thus conclusions their wearers ask and get. This would be like if you wore purple sunglasses, everything you’d see would be a bit purple. In our class we’ll focus on the following seven approaches:

1. Biological
2. Evolutionary

3. Psychodynamic
4. Behavioral
5. Cognitive
6. Humanistic
7. Socio-cultural

Assignment 1 Guidelines

a) To start you off on the road to psychological understanding, you are to read analytically the six articles provided (i.e. you will and should interact with and “mark up” the articles as you read). They range from peer reviewed articles to magazine and journal articles and represent these seven approaches. *Keep in mind that regardless of what approach you take to psychology, it is always a science.*

b) Think about how to answer the question, “What is Psychology?”. Then, in a minimum of 1,000 words, write a paper that responds to this question.

c) **You must meaningfully incorporate your understandings from all of the readings in your response.** Allow the readings to inform your understanding of the question. *Successful papers will synthesize these articles using them as evidence to support your definition of psychology (which is your thesis).*

These readings and the essay *will not be easy*, and they aren’t meant to be. However if you work through it, you will gain some wonderful psychological insights. It is expected at the AP level that when you encounter a word or term which you cannot define in the context of a reading (and you will), it is your responsibility to seek additional sources (online dictionaries are nice...) to help you.

d) Format: MLA

- a. Times New Roman, 12 point font
- b. Double Spaced
- c. Default margins are acceptable (1.25 or 1 inch margins, depending on your version of Word).
- d. DO NOT “DOUBLE-DOUBLE” SPACE BETWEEN YOUR PARAGRAPHS (you will lose points for this formatting error!)
- e. **MLA format, including both in-text citations and a Works Cited page.**
- f. PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MUST TURN IN A COPY OF THIS PAPER TO TURNITIN.COM DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

(Please consult your NoodleTools account and/or the Online Writing Lab from Purdue University at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> should you have any questions) 4

“What is Psychology” Paper Rubric	Earned Points
Self-Assessment	
Clarity	25
Does the paper clearly provide the thesis?	A- 22.5-25
Does the paper provide clear topic sentence(s) for each paragraph?	B – 20-22 C – 17.5-19
Does the paper make good use of transition words (i.e. it’s not a “choppy” read)?	D – 15-17 F – 14 and below

Comprehension	20
Are the main arguments clearly expressed to the reader?	A – 18 – 20
Is it clear that the writer comprehends the argument or points they are trying to express?	B – 16-17
	C – 14-15
	D – 12-13
	F – 11 and below
Analysis	30
Did the writer provide a good analysis of the readings?	A – 27-30
Does the writer demonstrate that he/she is thinking about and processing the readings (instead of simply restating information)?	B – 24-26
	C – 21-23
	D – 18-20
	F – 17 and below
Reading/Paper connection	30
Did the writer make good use of the readings in supporting his/her arguments or points?	A – 27-30
Did the writer clearly link the readings and thesis?	B – 24-26
	C – 21-23
	D – 18-20
	F – 17 and below
Format	15
Is the length requirement met, and not excessively exceeded?	Yes - 15
Is the paper free of spelling and grammar errors?	A few errors – 10.5
Did the writer use proper MLA format?	Many errors/no – 0 (zero)
Is there an MLA formatted title page?	
Was there a MLA formatted works cited page?	
Is self-assessment completed (circle what you think you earned)?	
Total points earned	/120

Assignment 2: Find and label the circulatory system, the endocrine system, the brain (both the lateral view and full view), a neuron, the eye, and the ear. You will turn these in with the paper. This is required and will be graded for accuracy.