



**A.P. Psychology Semester Syllabus  
Grand Haven High School  
Social Studies Department**



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Class Website: [portengaclasses.com](http://portengaclasses.com)

**Materials:** Text – *Myers' Psychology for AP*, Second Edition (If you want to be able to write and highlight in this book then you can purchase it for \$124.00. Please make your check payable to GHAPS.)

Other Reading – *Famous Studies in Psychology* – This booklet will be assigned throughout the school year along with a study guide to complete as we cover different chapters. This is a supplement to our textbook.

Textbook Website:

<https://www.macmillanlearning.com/studentresources/highschool/hsbridgepage/myersap2e.html#> This site contains valuable study tools to assist you in your reading. Included are flashcards, quizzes, crosswords, videos and simulations that will help you learn the material. We will be using this site for some assignments and I strongly recommend you use this site to help yourself study.

Class Website: [portengaclasses.com](http://portengaclasses.com) Simply click on Mr. Portenga and then click on AP Psychology. This site includes each day's class agenda along with valuable links to my power point notes and assignments. Each day of the week is outlined so that you and your parents can look ahead to what we're learning or see what you missed if you're absent. There are also links to a variety of online resources that can help you prepare for class tests, quizzes and the A.P. Exam in May.

Various films, research articles, and supplementary materials will be used

Outside reading, including research articles, fiction, and nonfiction will be required. A reading list and/or handouts will be provided.

**Supplies:** a 2" minimum, 3 ring binder; notebook paper; a folder for handouts; 3x5 cards for flashcards (the kind on the spiral ring work well); and pencils & pens

**AP Test/Exam:** **The AP Psychology test is in the afternoon usually the first or second week in May. All students will be required to take either this test or a class final exam that is an older version of this test. Test cost is \$110.**

The most important concept to understand is that this course is **a college level course**. It is designed to replace Introduction to Psychology in a student's freshman year of college. Students who chose this course should do so with the understanding that only self-motivated, dedicated, serious students will be successful. Unlike an AP course in literature, which deals mainly with skills the students must master to discuss an unknown piece of literature (difficult for other reasons), this class deals with content, content, content. In order to master that content, students must be self-directed and intrinsically motivated to succeed. **While it will vary for some students, you can expect to spend an average of 8-10 hours outside of class per week preparing for this class.**

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

In addition to the course objectives listed below by the APA, my main objective in teaching this course is to prepare students to score at least a 3 on the AP Exam offered by the College Board in May. As listed in the *APA High School Program: Statement on the Curriculum for the High School Psychology Course*, the course objectives are listed below. For a list of topics to be covered and more information on the course, please see the [AP Course Description Guide](#) provided by the AP College Board.

1. Students should [read *will* for should] study the major core concepts and theories of psychology. They should be able to define key terms and to use these terms in their everyday vocabulary. Students should be able to compare and contrast major theories in psychology. **It is impossible to cover all the material in class, therefore it is imperative that you keep up with your reading and assignments in order to be prepared for each test.**
2. Students should learn the basic skills of psychological research. They should be able to devise simple research projects, interpret and generalize from results, and evaluate the general validity of research reports.
3. Students should be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives. They should be able to recognize psychological principles when they are encountered in everyday situations.
4. Students should develop critical thinking skills. They should become aware of the danger of blindly accepting or rejecting any psychological theory without careful, objective evaluation.
5. Students should build their reading, writing, and discussion skills.
6. Students should learn about the ethical standards governing the work of psychologists. They should maintain high ethical standards and sensitivity in applying the principles of psychology to themselves, other peoples, and other organisms.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Read and outline each chapter of the text (I will give you tips before the first reading assignment)
- keep a library of note cards covering the vocabulary
- take notes in class
- do outside readings
- conduct simple experiments and analyze the data
- write essays, create projects, utilize the internet
- participate in class discussions and group work
- take practice tests, write rubrics, score essays, and learn strategies for test-taking
- attend class—choose class over senate, student government activities, or other in-school fun stuff (just say no to missing class)

## **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:**

- I will be organized
- I will treat everyone fairly—this does not always mean the same.
- I will attempt to create interesting assignments.
- I will expect at least the same level of commitment and effort of you as I do myself
- I will be demanding in terms of quality of work and that work being turned in on time
- I will treat you as adults.
- I will hold you accountable for the absenteeism and make-up work policies in your student handbook. We will discuss these just to clarify.

## **WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:**

- To assume responsibility for all of your behavior. There are no excuses.
- Ask appropriate questions
- Wait to talk during whole class discussions until you are called on —everyone needs a chance to think and formulate ideas
- Know and follow procedures for this class.
- Be prepared for every class period.
- Go to the bathroom and take care of personal matters prior to getting to class.
- Bring all class materials every day without returning to your locker.
- You are responsible for all work, including getting notes and assignments from days you are absent and submitting that work on time according to the policy in your student handbook.
- Have a positive attitude about the course and your ability to do well.

## GRADING:

Your final grade will be calculated as follows. Assignments/Homework are worth 10%, Class work is worth 5% and in-class quizzes are worth 20%, online review quizzes are worth 5%. Tests and major projects are worth 60%. Grades will be posted weekly in class by student ID number and are available on the Internet in the "Parent" section at [www.ghaps.org](http://www.ghaps.org). The school wide grading scale can be found in the school handbook.

## FINAL EXAM: Exams will be given at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Semesters. There are two options for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester final exam.

You can take the AP Psychology exam administered by the College Board in May and receive CR for your exam grade. In this case, your final semester average will be used as your exam grade for the Final Semester. The option of opting out of your 2nd Semester final exam is available as long as you have not violated the absence or tardy policy and are passing the class.

Your other option is to take a final exam to be administered by me on the same day the College Board administers their exam. This exam will be a released copy of an actual AP Psychology exam. This exam will be scored and your final semester grade will be calculated by averaging your Semester grade (80%), and the raw score of your final exam (20%) grades. Any student (**including seniors**) who has *not* paid for the AP Psychology exam by the due date required will automatically be required to take my final exam.

In either case, all students will be required to attend class and complete all assignments and midterm review exams in order to receive credit for the semester. Please understand that there are typically 2 ½ -3 weeks of school after the exam is taken. A student does have the option of taking the A.P. College Board Exam and then taking the Final Semester Exam for the class in an effort to raise their grade in the class. **If a student should go over 9 absences in class then the school policy of taking a final exam and having to score a 70% or better to retain credit in the class applies.**

## SOME POLICY ISSUES:

- All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the date announced, unless otherwise stated. Late work will **NOT** be accepted unless you have a late homework pass which allows you to turn in your work the next day for full credit.
- All class work will be completed if an absence occurs. Students are responsible for informing me **ahead of time for anticipated absences** (e.g. extracurricular responsibilities, field trips, sporting events, appointments, etc.) and **making arrangements in advance for completing missed work.** Late work that was pre-arranged will not be penalized. Work missed as a result of a student not making prior arrangements for pre-arranged absences will be penalized. Work missed due to an unexcused absence must be completed, but zero credit will be given for that day's class and any assignment that was due (including exams). You have two days for each day you are absent to turn in make up work. Work not submitted on time will be penalized. **Example: if you have a pre-excused absence for an athletic event, which means you'll miss my class and we have an assignment due that day, you are responsible for turning in that assignment before you leave.**
- All students will be given 2 late homework passes that can be used to turn in a late note-taking assignment the day after it was due and still receive full credit. These may not be used on work that are more than 1 day late and cannot be used for large projects, tests or quizzes.
- All students will receive 2 bathroom passes to be used throughout the semester whenever they need to leave class. Missing class time results in missing important information that you need to know for your success. Please try to plan accordingly. Students with medical conditions or during a time of emergency do not need to use a pass. Passes not used can be turned in for extra credit at the end of the semester.
- I have no sympathy for students who schedule senior pictures, prom fittings, hair appts, etc... during class or who miss for concerts, road trips, etc... and then want help them with work missed. I realize you're high school students, but you're going to have to deal learn to prioritize and plan ahead if you're going to miss.

- Submit work directly to me. If you need to turn in work and you can't find me, please email it to [portengaa@ghaps.org](mailto:portengaa@ghaps.org) or give it to the secretary in the main office and have her date, time, and sign it. Late work will not be accepted.
- All written work must be word-processed, unless otherwise specified (reading notes & class notes are the exceptions). Work not word-processed will not be accepted, and thus will receive a late grade. **Problems with computers, printers, flash drives, or related issues, are student issues. Plan ahead.** Be sure to keep both hard copy and flash drive back-ups of all work turned in. In the event your printer fails, email the work to me ([portengaa@ghaps.org](mailto:portengaa@ghaps.org)) and I will print it out.
- All work should be proofread thoroughly before being turned in. Organization of material is essential for clarity and persuasiveness. It is therefore critical that you organize your writing clearly. Grammar counts. Spell-checkers are nice, but do not let them do the job alone.
- Extra credit is posted on our website and must be completed before the test for that particular unit. You're primary concern should be your daily assignments and studying. If you are caught up with your work then go ahead and extend your learning using the extra credit assignments. Extra credit can't move a grade from a low B to an A. Your best bet is to improve your study methods and keep up on the daily work and note taking if you want a high grade in the class.
- All work is expected to be completed by the student. Plagiarism is prohibited. Students who are caught copying work, lending work to be copied, or submitting work not authored by said student, will receive a double 0 on that assignment and be required to re-do the assignment also for 0 credit. You may also be asked to drop the class after more than occurrence. Please read the Code of Academic Integrity handout carefully (posted online and in the room). You will be held responsible for this information.

Circumstances during the year may require changing the terms of this syllabus. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the changes and follow them accordingly.