

**Social Studies Standards**

**11th & 12th Grade Psychology**

**Course Overview:** This class will provide students with an introduction to the study of psychology. Through reading, research, lab experiments, and group exercises students will work to gain a better understanding of human behavior. Through the exploration of such topics as learning and memory, life span development, personality, psychological disorders, and social psychology, students will discover new ways of looking at themselves and of interpreting the behavior of other people. Students will gain new insight into behavior and new practical information on how to deal with situations in everyday life.

**Unit 1: What is Psychology (2 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will explore the potential benefits from studying psychology, describe the work that psychologists do and the research methods they use in their work, and describe how the work of pioneers in the field influence contemporary psychologists.

**Standards**

1. The student will define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science.
2. The student will describe the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.
3. The student will describe perspectives employed to understand behavior and mental processes.
4. The student will explain how psychology evolved as a scientific discipline.
5. The student will discuss the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals.
6. The student will describe the major subfields of psychology.
7. The student will identify the important role psychology plays in benefiting society and improving people’s lives.

**Unit 2: Research Methods (3 Weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe and use research methods and measurements used to study behavior and mental processes 

**Standards**

1. Students will define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science.
2. Students will describe the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.
3. Students will describe perspectives employed to understand behavior and mental processes.
4. Students will explain how psychology evolved as a scientific discipline.
5. Students will describe the scientific method and its role in psychology.
6. Students will describe and compare a variety of quantitative (e.g., surveys, correlations, experiments) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, narratives, focus groups) research methods.
7. Students will define systematic procedures used to improve the validity of research findings, such as external validity.
8. Students will discuss how and why psychologists use non-human animals in research.
9. Students will identify ethical standards psychologists must address regarding research with human participants.
10. Students will identify ethical guidelines psychologists must address regarding research with non-human animals (E.12.9).
11. Students will define descriptive statistics and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.
12. Students will define forms of qualitative data and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.
13. Students will define correlation coefficients and explain their appropriate interpretation.
14. Students will interpret graphical representations of data as used in both quantitative and qualitative methods (E.12.14).
15. Students will explain other statistical concepts, such as statistical significance and effect size.
16. Students will explain how validity and reliability of observations and measurements relate to data analysis.

**Unit 3: Biology and Behavior (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe and understand the structure and function of the nervous system in human and non-human animals, the structure and function of endocrine system, the interaction between biological factors and experience and the methods and issues related to biological advances.

**Standards**

1. Students will identify the major divisions and subdivisions of the human nervous system.
2. Students will identify the parts of the neuron and describe the basic process of neural transmission.
3. Students will differentiate between the structures and functions of the various parts of the central nervous system.
4. Students will describe lateralization of brain functions (E.12.1).
5. Students will discuss the mechanisms of, and the importance of, plasticity of the nervous system.
6. Students will describe how the endocrine glands are linked to the nervous system.
7. Students will describe the effects of hormones on behavior and mental processes.
8. Students will describe hormone effects on the immune system.
9. Students will describe concepts in genetic transmission.
10. Students will describe the interactive effects of heredity and environment.
11. Students will explain how evolved tendencies influence behavior.
12. Students will identify tools used to study the nervous system.
13. Students will describe advances made in neuroscience.
14. Students will discuss issues related to scientific advances in neuroscience and genetics.

**Unit 4: Sensation and Perception (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will understand and describe the processes of sensation and perception, explore the capabilities and limitations of sensory processes, and examine the interaction of the person and the environment in determining perception.

**Standards**

1. Students will discuss processes of sensation and perception and how they interact.
2. Students will explain the concepts of threshold and adaptation.
3. Students will list forms of physical energy for which humans and non-human animals do and do not have sensory receptors.
4. Students will describe the visual sensory system (E.12.1).
5. Students will describe the auditory sensory system (E.12.1).
6. Students will describe other sensory systems, such as olfaction, gustation, and somesthesis (e.g., skin senses, kinesthesis, and vestibular sense) (E.12.1).
7. Students will explain Gestalt principles of perception.
8. Students will describe binocular and monocular depth cues.
9. Students will describe the importance of perceptual constancies.
10. Students will describe perceptual illusions.
11. Students will describe the nature of attention.
12. Students will explain how experiences and expectations influence perception.

**Unit 5: Learning (4 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe and apply the processes of classical and operant conditioning and explain the roles that observation and cognitive factors play in learning.

**Standards**

1. Students will describe the principles of classical conditioning.
2. Students will describe clinical and experimental examples of classical conditioning.
3. Students will apply classical conditioning to everyday life.
4. Students will describe the Law of Effect.
5. Students will describe the principles of operant conditioning.
6. Students will describe clinical and experimental examples of operant conditioning.
7. Students will apply operant conditioning to everyday life.
8. Students will describe the principles of observational and cognitive learning (E.12.1).
9. Students will apply observational and cognitive learning to everyday life (E.12.2).

**Unit 6: Memory (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will explain how memories are encoded, stored and retrieved. They will describe why we forget and practice techniques for improving memory.

**Standards**

1. Students will identify factors that influence encoding.
2. Students will characterize the difference between shallow (surface) and deep (elaborate) processing.
3. Students will discuss strategies for improving the encoding of memory.
4. Students will describe the differences between working memory and long-term memory.
5. Students will identify and explain biological processes related to how memory is stored (E.12.1).
6. Students will discuss types of memory and memory disorders (e.g., amnesias, dementias) (E.12.1) (E.12.9).
7. Students will discuss strategies for improving the storage of memories.
8. Students will analyze the importance of retrieval cues in memory.
9. Students will explain the role that interference plays in retrieval.
10. Students will discuss the factors influencing how memories are retrieved (E.12.1).
11. Students will explain how memories can be malleable.
12. Students will discuss strategies for improving the retrieval of memories.

**Unit 7: Thinking and Language (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will understand and explain the structural features of language, describe the theories and developmental stages of language acquisition, and explain the role that various brain structures play in language acquisition, development and use. Students will describe the basic elements comprising thought, and the obstacles related to thought as well as ways to avoid said obstacles in solving problems and making decisions.

**Standards**

1. Students will describe the structure and function of language.
2. Students will discuss the relationship between language and thought (E.12.2).
3. Students will explain the process of language acquisition (E.12.1).
4. Students will discuss how acquisition of a second language can affect language development and possibly other cognitive processes.
5. Students will evaluate the theories of language acquisition.
6. Students will identify the brain structures associated with language (E.12.1).
7. Students will discuss how damage to the brain may affect language (E.12.1).
8. Students will define cognitive processes involved in understanding information (E.12.1).
9. Students will define processes involved in problem solving and decision making.
10. Students will discuss non-human problem-solving abilities.
11. Students will describe obstacles to problem solving.
12. Students will describe obstacles to decision making.
13. Students will describe obstacles to making good judgments.

**Unit 8: Intelligence (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe the leading perspectives on intelligence, explain how intelligence is assessed and issues in intelligence.

**Standards**

1. Students will discuss intelligence as a general factor.
2. Students will discuss alternative conceptualizations of intelligence (E.12.2).
3. Students will describe the extremes of intelligence.
4. Students will discuss the history of intelligence testing, including historical use and misuse in the context of fairness.
5. Students will identify current methods of assessing human abilities (E.12.2).
6. Students will identify measures of and data on reliability and validity for intelligence test scores.
7. Students will discuss issues related to the consequences of intelligence testing.
8. Students will discuss the influences of biological, cultural, and environmental factors on intelligence (E.12.1).

**Unit 9: Motivation and Emotion (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will explain various perspectives on motivation and emotion, describe the domains of motivated behavior in humans and non-human animals as well as the domains of emotional behavior.

**Standards**

1. Students will explain biologically based theories of motivation (E.12.1).
2. Students will explain cognitively based theories of motivation.
3. Students will explain humanistic theories of motivation (E.12.2).
4. Students will explain the role of culture in human motivation (E.12.2).
5. Students will discuss eating behavior (E.12.1).
6. Students will discuss achievement motivation (E.12.2).
7. Students will discuss other ways in which humans and non-human animals are motivated.
8. Students will explain the biological and cognitive components of emotion (E.12.1).
9. Students will discuss psychological research on basic human emotions.
10. Students will differentiate among theories of emotional experience.
11. Students will explain how biological factors influence emotional interpretation and expression (E.12.1).
12. Students will explain how culture and gender influence emotional interpretation and expression (E.12.2).
13. Students will explain how other environmental factors influence emotional interpretation and expression.
14. Students will identify biological and environmental influences on the expression and experience of negative emotions, such as fear (E.12.1) (E.12.2).
15. Students will identify biological and environmental influences on the expression and experience of positive emotions, such as happiness (E.12.1) (E.12.2).

**Unit 10: Social Cognition and Interaction (3 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe the factors that influence social cognition and explain how membership in a group and social norms influence individual behavior.

**Standards**

1. Students will describe attributional explanations of behavior.
2. Students will describe the relationship between attitudes (implicit and explicit) and behavior (E.12.3).
3. Students will identify persuasive methods used to change attitudes.
4. Students will describe the power of the situation.
5. Students will describe effects of others’ presence on individuals’ behavior (E.12.5) (E.12.6).
6. Students will describe how group dynamics influence behavior (E.12.6) (E.12.15).
7. Students will discuss how an individual influences group behavior (E.12.5) (E.12.6) (E.12.15).
8. Students will discuss the nature and effects of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.
9. Students will describe determinants of prosocial behavior (E.12.2).
10. Students will discuss influences upon aggression and conflict.
11. Students will discuss factors influencing attraction and relationships (E.12.2) (E.12.3).

**Unit 11: Psychological Disorders (4 weeks)**

**Description:** In this unit, students will describe the various perspectives on abnormal behavior and categorize psychological disorders.

**Standards**

1. Students will define psychologically abnormal behavior.
2. Students will describe historical and cross-cultural views of abnormality (E.12.2) (E.12.3).
3. Students will describe major models of abnormality (E.12.1) (E.12.16).
4. Students will discuss how stigma relates to abnormal behavior (E.12.3).
5. Students will discuss the impact of psychological disorders on the individual, family, and society.
6. Students will describe the classification of psychological disorders.
7. Students will discuss the challenges associated with diagnosis.
8. Students will describe symptoms and causes of major categories of psychological disorders (including schizophrenic, mood, anxiety, and personality disorders) (E.12.16).
9. Students will evaluate how different factors influence an individual’s experience of psychological disorders (E.12.1) (E.12.16).
10. Students will discuss the impact of psychological disorders on the individual, family, and society (E.12.9).