

Curriculum Development  
In the Fairfield Public Schools

**FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

**PSYCHOLOGY**  
**SEMESTER COURSE**

Board of Education Approved 03/25/2008

# **PSYCHOLOGY - SEMESTER COURSE**

## **Social Studies Department Scope and Sequence**

This course is offered as an elective open to only twelfth graders. The prerequisite for this course is successful completion of required social studies courses in Highlights of Western Civilization, Justice in America, Modern Global Studies, and United States History.

## **Statement of Purpose**

For our students to effectively function in an increasingly complex world, they will need thinking skills that help them navigate the inherent life issues. This introductory Psychology course is designed to expose the students to the historical foundations of this evolving field of study, and to satisfy their growing curiosity in a range of life topics. Students will master meaningful content and apply critical thinking skills to practical situations.

## **Design and Description**

This Psychology course deals with the ideas, research and personalities shaping modern thinking. Units of study include a historical overview of the discipline of Psychology, Human Development throughout the Lifespan, the correlation of Mind and Body, Personality Theory, Therapy and Change and Disturbance and Breakdown.

## **Course Goals**

Students should:

- understand human development and behavior
- explain and understand the structure of and the connection between the physical body and the mind.
- understand human relationships
- explain major schools and theories of psychology
- identify different methods of diagnosis and therapies

## **Essential Questions**

- To what extent are current issues in Psychology rooted in their historical legacy? (Fairfield)
- How do we become who we are? (Fairfield)
- What is the relationship of body and mind in explaining human behavior? (Fairfield)
- What are the major theories of personality? (Fairfield)
- What are the organic and inorganic therapies of choice for various psychological disorders? (Fairfield)
- How does abnormal behavior impact the quality of life? (Fairfield)

## **Units of Instruction Outline**

- I.** Overview of the Discipline of Psychology
- II.** Human Development
- III.** Mind and Body
- IV.** Personality Theory
- V.** Therapy and Change

## VI. Disturbance and Change

### **Psychology Standards (APA National Standards for HS Psychology Curricula)**

**APA Standards are met in the following areas:**

**APA.I: Methods Domain**

**APA.II: Bio-psychological Domain**

**APA.III: Developmental Domain**

**APA.IV: Cognitive Domain**

**APA.V: Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain**

### **Course Materials**

#### **Main Text:**

Blair-Broeker, Charles T. and Randal M. Ernst. Thinking About Psychology, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martins, W.H. Freeman and Worth Publishers, 2003.

### **Information and Technology Standards (to be added)**

# **UNITS OF STUDY**

## **I. Overview of the Discipline of Psychology**

### **Core Topics**

- History of psychology
- Modern perspectives of psychology

### **Essential Question**

- To what extent are current issues in Psychology rooted in their historical legacy? (Fairfield)

### **APA Standards**

Students are able to:

- IA-1.1 describe and compare the biological, behavioral, cognitive, socio-cultural, humanistic, and psychodynamic perspectives

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- define and explain key psychological terminology.
- summarize the major movements in the history of Psychology.
- develop an understanding of current Psychological perspectives and their foundation in the history of Psychology.

### **Focus Question**

- Who are the key psychologists known for each perspective?

### **Skill Objective**

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate the ability to use technology to enhance analysis and communication.

### **Suggested Activities**

- Research techniques using M and M's

### **Suggested Materials**

- Psychology today "Pursuing happiness"

### **Sample Assessment**

- Meet the Psychologists Project

### **Pacing**

1 - 2 weeks

## **II. Human Development**

### **Core Topics**

- Pre-natal and natal development and issues
- Childhood physical, cognitive, social and motor development
- Physical, cognitive and social development in adolescence and adulthood
- Death and dying

### **Essential Question**

- How do we become who we are? (Fairfield)

### **APA Standards**

Students are able to:

- III A-1.1 describe physical, social, and cognitive changes from the prenatal period throughout the lifespan.
- III A-1.4 apply lifespan principles to personal experience.
- III A-3.1 explain various developmental models.
- III A-3.2 recognize how biological and cultural notions of gender shape the experiences of men and women.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- identify issues relating to prenatal and natal development.
- articulate, using appropriate developmental terminology, the key issues in childhood, adolescence and adulthood development.
- understand the physical, cognitive, social and moral developments through each stage of human development.
- understand the stages of death and dying.

### **Focus Questions**

- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in infancy and childhood?
- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in adolescence?
- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in adulthood?
- What are the stages within the grieving process?

### **Skill Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- read and interpret information.

### **Suggested Activities**

- “Ordinary People” – movie dealing with grief and divorce
- “Invisible Children” – Child Development in non-western cultures

### **Suggested Materials**

- Value Formation chart

### **Sample Assessments**

- Child Development Interview
- Aged Interview

### **Pacing**

3-4 weeks

### **III. Mind and Body**

#### **Core Topics**

- Various divisions of the nervous system
- Brain structures and their functions
- Techniques used to study the brain
- Differences between Sensation and Perception
- The Senses
- Principles of Perception
- Extra Sensory Perception
- Altered States of Consciousness

#### **Essential Question**

- What is the relationship of body and mind in explaining human behavior?

#### **APA Standards**

Students are able to:

- IIA-3.1 identify the structure and function of the major regions of the brain.
- IIA-3.3 describe lateralization of brain functions
- IIB-1.2 describe the operation of sensory systems.
- IVD-2.2 compare theories that explain why we sleep.
- IVD-2.3 assess types of sleep disorders.

#### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- explain and understand the connection between the physical body and the mind.
- identify the different divisions of the nervous system and brain functions.
- comprehend the different functions of the senses and the perception of them.
- summarize the various altered states of consciousness.

#### **Focus Questions**

- What are the brain structures and their functions?
- What are the functions of the left and right hemispheres?
- What are the senses and how do they function?
- What are the main principles of perception?
- What are the types of sleep?
- What are the theories which explain our need of sleep?
- What altered states of consciousness are commonly experienced by humans?

#### **Skill Objectives**

Students will:

- develop the ability to understand issues from diverse viewpoints.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

**Suggested Activities**

- Guest speaker from Yale nursing on “Brain trauma and seizures”
- Sleep Diary

**Suggested Materials**

- SleepNet.com

**Sample Assessment**

- Blind Walk
- Senses project

**Pacing**

2-3 weeks



## IV. Personality Theory

### Core Topics

- Psychodynamic Theories
- Behaviorist/Social Cognitive Theories
- Humanistic Theories

### Essential Question

- What are the major theories of personality?

### APA Standards

#### *Students are able to:*

- IIIB-2.1 explain the characteristics of the psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, and trait approaches.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- express correct terminology for the psychoanalytic, humanistic and behavioral schools of personality.
- understand the major theories on personality development, such as Freud, Rogers and Skinner.
- identify the factors at work in individual personality development.

### Focus Questions

- What are the main theories of psychoanalytic personality school?
- What are the main theories of humanistic personality school?
- What are the main theories of behavioral personality school?

### Skill Objectives

Students will:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.

### Suggested Activities

- Personality test

### Sample Assessment

- “Who am I” project
- Psycho social family tree

### Pacing

3-4 weeks

## **V. Therapy and Change**

### **Core Topics**

- Psychoanalysis Therapy
- Humanistic Therapy
- Behavior Therapy
- Cognitive Therapy
- Group Therapy
- Bio medical Therapy

### **Essential Question**

- What are the organic and inorganic therapies of choice for various psychological disorders? (Fairfield)

### **APA Standards**

#### ***Students are able to:***

- VB-1.2 describe characteristics of effective treatment and prevention.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- identify the therapies utilized by each school of psychology, such as psychoanalytic, behavioral, cognitive, group and biomedical.
- explain the therapies available for various psychological disorders.

### **Focus Questions**

- What are the therapies of choice for the various psychological disorders?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the psychoanalytic school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the behavioral school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the cognitive school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the group school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the biomedical school?

### **Skill Objectives**

Students will:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.

### **Suggested Activities**

- Schools of Psychology Treatment options role play
- Type A vs. Type B testing

### **Sample Assessment**

- Treatment worksheet

### **Pacing**

1 week

## **VI. Disturbance and Change**

### **Core Topics**

- Definition and Classification of Disturbance
- The Neurosis
- The Psychosis
- The Personality Disorders

### **Essential Question**

- How does abnormal behavior impact the quality of life? (Fairfield)

### **APA Standards**

#### ***Students are able to:***

- VA-3.1 discuss major categories of abnormal behavior.
- VA-4.2 discuss the stigma associated with abnormal behavior.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- identify the major categories of illness.
- use the appropriate terminology in describing causes, symptoms and treatments of each illness.
- relate to persons afflicted by these psychological disturbances.

### **Focus Questions**

- What are the causes of the individual disorders?
- What are the everyday implications of life for persons living with various disorders?
- What are the major categories of the disturbances?

### **Skill Objectives**

Students will:

- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.
- develop the ability to understand issues from diverse viewpoints.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

### **Suggested Activities**

- “A Beautiful Mind” – study of schizophrenia
- “Sybil” – study of multiple personality disorder

### **Sample Assessment**

- Diagnosis of disorders as portrayed in “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”
- Project “me” presentations

### **Pacing**

7 weeks