**Preparing for the AP Psychology Exam**

**100 multiple-choice questions: 70 minutes**

**2 free response questions: 50 minutes**

\* Bring two pencils with you and a pen or two for the essay.

**\* Do not bring cell phones into the testing site.**

\* There is a “zero tolerance” policy for cheating, talking during the exam or being

disruptive in any way. If any of these happen, you will be asked to leave and your

test will not be scored.

\* No one is allowed to leave the testing site until the time has expired for the last

section of the test.

**Tips for success**

\* Review all of your test preps. If you know the terms on each test prep, you are well

on your way to scoring a “five.”

\* Know all of the different psychological perspectives or schools of thought. We have

attached a review sheet for this.

\* Spend some time reviewing the “Hall of Fame” psychologists that we have studied

this year (see attached list of names).

\* You can do practice multiple-choice items at the following website:

<http://www.appsychology.com/HowPass/MC%20quizes/MCquizeshome.htm>

\* You can also access previous AP Psychology Free Response Questions. It is worth taking a look at this site to get a sense of the format and layout of previous questions.

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/exam/exam_information/2088.html>

**\* Review this list of concepts that have surprised students on recent released exams:**

-The blood-brain barrier -Method of Loci

-Hans Selye’s general adaptation syndrome (GAS) -Lev Vygotsky

-Type I errors (false alarms) and Type II errors (misses) -The cocktail party effect

-Psychology was heavily influenced by philosophy and biology -Central route to persuasion

-Self Concept (link to Humanism and Carl Rogers) -Hermann Ebbinghaus

-Iconic memory and echoic memory -Figure-ground images

-Human Factors -Culture fair testing

-Methadone -Animism

-Habituation w/development -“Blank Slate”

-Cohort effect -Myelin sheath and M.S.

-The stroop effect (difficult because of auto-processing) -Agoraphobia

**Name Hall of Fame**

**Biopsych**

-Phineas Gage **Motivation and Emotion**

-Roger Sperry , Michael Gazzaniga -Abraham Maslow

-Paul Ekman

**Sensation and Perception**

-David Hubel and Thorsten Wiesel **Personality Theory**

-Sigmund Freud

**States of Consciousness** (no major names)-Carl Jung

-Alfred Adler

**Learning Theory**

-John Watson

-Ivan Pavlov

- Edward Thorndike **Testing and Individual Differences**

-Albert Bandura -Alfred Binet

- Martin Seligman -David Wechsler

- B.F. Skinner -Howard Gardner

-Robert Sternberg

**Memory**

-Elizabeth Loftus

-Hermann Ebbinghaus **Abnormal Psych and Treatment**

-David Rosenhan’s study

**Thought and Language** -Albert Ellis

-Noam Chomsky -Aaron Beck

-Benjamin Whorf -Carl Rogers

-“Genie”

-Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky **Social Psychology**

-Philip Zimbardo

**Development** -Stanley Milgram

-Jean Piaget -Solomon Asch

-Erik Erikson

-Diana Baumrind

-Mary Ainsworth **History of Psychology**

-Lawrence Kohlberg -William James

-Harry Harlow -Wilhelm Wundt

**Psych concepts that are often confused or misunderstood**

**Statistics and Research**

Random sampling vs. random assignment

Independent vs. dependent variable

Experimental vs. control condition

Inferential statistics vs. descriptive statistics

Positive vs. negative correlation

*p* values, *r values* and z scores

Correlations vs. causation

Social desirability bias vs. demand characteristic

Positive vs. negative skews

**Biopsychology**

Action vs. resting potential

Polarized vs. depolarized (in neural firing)

Sensory (afferent) vs. motor (efferent) neurons

Broca’s vs. Wernicke’s areas

Sympathetic vs. parasympathetic NS

Autonomic vs. somatic NS

Neurotransmitters vs. hormones

Cerebral cortex vs. corpus callosum

Left brain vs. right brain

Genetic predisposition vs. genetic determinism

Agonists vs. antagonists

fMRI vs. PET scans

Thalamus vs. hypothalamus

**Sensation and Perception**

Bottom-up vs. top-down processing

Absolute vs. difference threshold

Sensory adaptation vs. habituation

Rods vs. cones

Conductive vs. sensorineural hearing loss

Retinal disparity vs. convergence

Trichromatic theory vs. opponent process theory of color vision

Place theory vs. frequency theory

Vestibular sense vs. kinesthetic sense

**States of Consciousness**

Manifest vs. latent content of dreams

Nightmares vs. night terrors

Activation-synthesis theory vs. memory consolidation theory

The blood brain barrier

Sleep apnea vs. narcolepsy

The different categories of psychoactive drugs

Different views on what hypnosis is

**Learning Theory**

Positive reinforcement vs. negative reinforcement

Negative reinforcement vs. positive punishment

Classical vs. operant conditioning

Interval vs. ratio schedules

Fixed vs. variable schedules

Insight learning vs. latent learning

**Memory**

Proactive vs. retroactive interference

Method of loci vs. peg word system

Primacy vs. recency effect

Anterograde vs. retrograde amnesia

Iconic vs. echoic (sensory memory)

State dependent vs. context dependent memory

Role of the hippocampus vs. role of the cerebellum in memory

**Thought and Language**

Algorithms vs. heuristics

Representativeness heuristic vs. availability heuristic

Hindsight bias vs. the self-serving bias

Confirmation bias vs. belief perseverance

Divergent vs. convergent thinking

Phonemes vs. morphemes

Nativism and the LAD vs. Skinner’s view on language acquisition

**Development**

Socialization vs. maturation

Continuity vs. discontinuity

Primary vs. secondary sex characteristics

Assimilation vs. accommodation

Object permanence vs. conservation

Egocentrism vs. animism

Concrete vs. formal operations

Secure vs. ambivalent vs. avoidant attachment styles

Authoritative vs. authoritarian parenting styles

Gender identity vs. gender typing

**Motivation and Emotion**

Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation

Evolutionary psychology vs. ethology

Arousal theory vs. drive theory

IO psych, human factors, positive psych

Roles of lateral hypothalamus vs. ventromedial hypothalamus

Theories of emotion (James-Lange, Schachter Two Factor and Cannon Bard)

Hans Selye’s General Adaptation Syndrome (A.R.E)

Cultural display rules vs. Facial Feedback Hypothesis

**Personality Theory**

Type A vs. Type B personality

Cardinal vs. central traits

Extroversion vs. neuroticism

Id vs. ego vs. superego

Internal vs. external locus of control

Thematic Apperception test vs. Rorschach inkblot test

Displacement vs. sublimation

Projection vs. reaction formation

Archetypes and the collective unconscious

Anima vs. animus

Situational (external) attributions vs. dispositional (internal) attributions

UPR vs. conditions of worth

Roger’s view on human nature vs. Freud’s view on human nature

**Testing and Individual Differences**

Reliability vs. validity

Achievement vs. aptitude tests

Crystallized vs. fluid intelligence

Views on intelligence: *g,* Sternberg’s Triarchic Theory, Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences

The Myers-Briggs vs. the MMPI

Factor analysis

Norming an assessment

Self-fulfilling prophecy and stereotype threat

**Abnormal Psychology AND Treatment of Psychological Disorders**

Persistent depressive disorder vs. seasonal affective disorder

Bipolar vs. cyclothymia

Conversion disorder vs. illness anxiety disorder

Schizophrenia vs. dissociative identity disorder

Dissociative amnesia vs. dissociative amnesia with fugue

Positive vs. negative symptoms of schizophrenia

Hallucinations vs. delusions

Borderline vs. histrionic personality disorder

GAD vs. panic disorder

Diathesis-stress model

Obsessions vs. compulsions (in OCD)

Transference vs. resistance (in psychodynamic therapy)

Systematic desensitization vs. flooding

Albert Ellis (REBT) vs. Aaron Beck’s cognitive therapy

Rosenhan’s study on institutionalization vs. deinstitutionalization

Specific antipsychotic, antianxiety, antidepressant drugs AND how they work

**Social Psychology**

Social inhibition vs. social facilitation

Social loafing vs. deindividuation

Groupthink vs. group polarization

Zimbardo’s mock prison study vs. the prisoner’s dilemma

Central vs. peripheral route to persuasion

Individualistic vs. collectivist cultures

Asch on conformity vs. Milgram on obedience

***Tips for the Multiple-Choice Section***

* **Slow down**. Be aware of the clock, yes, but remember that 70 minutes is a pretty reasonable amount of time for 100 items, if you're well prepared.
* If you have time to review a bit at the end of the 70-minute session, try to discipline yourself to **revisit only those items you'd marked** as being potentially problematic. Re-evaluating and changing answers isn't a bad thing per se, but you obviously want to avoid talking yourself out of responses that don't need changing.
* Remember that this section is **worth 66% of your total exam score**. Even though you may get tired as the section progresses, hang in there, because these items carry a lot of weight.
* **Leave no blanks.** If you've worked conscientiously through this book you should be able to use **process of elimination** and thus arrive at a reasonable answer choice even on the most difficult items on the exam. Since the so-called “guessing penalty” (in which ¼ point was deducted for each wrong answer) is no longer in force, you should answer all questions.
* Don't look for patterns in your responses. In the end, the exam will likely have a pretty balanced distribution of A's, B’s, C's, D's and E's, but you should never answer a question based on reasoning like, "That's too many ‘B's in a row.” You could conceivably have four B's’ in a row - don't worry about it.
* One effective strategy is to cover the answer choices and answer the question to yourself before even looking at the options. This makes it less likely that you will be lured off-track by appealing distractors, which can spare you valuable time that might otherwise be lost debating with yourself about an item you really do know.

***Tips for the Free Response Questions***

* **Do the question you know best first**. It'll be very frustrating if you take an inordinate amount of time struggling with essay #1 only to find you have limited time to answer the second question that you know very well. Take the same approach *within* each question - answer the parts you know well first, then give your best attempt at whatever remains.
* Remember that **the two essays each carry the same scoring weight**. Even if one looks bigger or appears to have more points to earn in it, don't be deceived.
* **Know what the question is specifically asking** and systematically address all of it. That seems obvious, but a large percentage of test takers simply don't do it.
* Your job is to tell the readers what you know. It can be helpful to pretend that they don't know anything - **they're smart but don't know psychology, and you're explaining it to them**, using appropriate psychological terminology.
* Make sure you **STATE each concept** as you discuss it in your writing. Also, you may want to help your reader out by underlining each term.
* Always **tie your answer directly back to the prompt**. If a prompt describes an experiment, everything you write should be in the context of that experiment.