INTRODUCTION

AP Psychology is a college-level course designed to take the place of a two-semester, Introduction to Psychology offering. As such, students will be expected to show understanding of the full range of foundational topics in the field of psychology – from research methods and early history, to the biological basis for behavior, to cognitive, developmental and abnormal psychology, to the processes of sensation/perception, and finally to specific studies in memory, intelligence, personality, language and therapy.

To be successful, AP Psychology students must be able to keep up with assigned reading, to take notes independently on the key understandings from both textbook and independent sources, and to then be able to apply the content to real-world situations, accurately using the terminology and concepts learned to support your position (in both free-response test questions and during independent research).

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Obtain a copy of John Medina’s Brain Rules: “12 principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School” (Pear Press, 2014). It is available in paperback form through online booksellers, and is also available in electronic format for e-readers such as Nook and Kindle. Total cost should not exceed $15, including shipping. If price is an issue for you, please contact one of us for assistance with your purchase. We also have copies of Brain Rules available for loan from the Southington Public Library.
Once you have the book:

1. Read and annotate or outline the twelve “rules” described by Medina.

2. Using your notes from step 1 above, choose 4 of the rules to include in a reflective essay. This essay should be 4-6 pages in length total, double-spaced, and should address the following for each rule:

   A. Provide a summary of the rule. Explain how it illustrates one of the overarching themes we will study all year in psychology: everything psychological is simultaneously biological

   B. Give an example from your own life that serves to illustrate the validity of this rule. Explain the events/persons involved, and describe the connection between the behaviors in your example and the underlying brain processes/functions and/or structures that made this example possible. What happened, and then how can this example be explained by the new things you are learning about the brain from Brain Rules?

   C. In your final paragraph, provide a couple of specific ways that you plan to use the things you have learned from one or more of the 12 rules to become more effective at school and/or home. In other words, knowing what you know now, how will you make better use of your own brain?

3. Your paper is due on Friday, August 30th. Late submissions will result in a reduction of grade.

4. Finally, be sure to keep your copy of Brain Rules handy for a series of assignments during the year, as we delve into the topics of specific chapters, such as cognition, memory, brain anatomy and perception.

I am eager to work with you this fall, and look forward to a dynamic and challenging journey together! I will be checking my email periodically through the summer, so do not hesitate to email questions about your paper, or from your reading, as needed. My email address is:

Ms. Allenback = hallenback@southingtonschools.org

Happy Summer!