

Year 11 Psychology Summer Work 2026

Welcome to the Ruislip High School A Level Psychology Induction Programme.

You must complete all sections of the summer work programme to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the background for the topics you will study at A Level.

The programme includes a variety of different tasks and resources which will equip you with the knowledge and skills required to be a successful A Level psychology student at Ruislip High School Sixth Form.

You will also find a range of wider reading/viewing materials to extend your knowledge of the topics in the A Level psychology specification.

The A Level psychology specification and examination outline is below:

Paper 1 (Year 12) <u>Topics Covered</u> Memory Social Influences Attachment Clinical Psychology & Mental Health <u>The Examination</u> 96 marks total- 2 hours	Paper 2 (Year 12) <u>Topics Covered</u> Approaches Biopsychology Research Methods <u>The Examination</u> 96 marks total- 2 hours	Paper 3 (Year 13) <u>Topics Covered</u> Issues & Debates Relationships Eating Behaviour Aggression <u>The Examination</u> 96 marks total- 2 hours
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Miss Samei will go through this with you all once you start in September, this is just a general overview of some key topics. Enjoy!

The Plan

Here is a suggested plan for completing the psychology summer work over the summer holiday:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Approaches in Psychology: The Behaviourist Approach
1	Approaches in Psychology: Social Learning Theory
2	Approaches in Psychology: The Biological Approach
2	Approaches in Psychology: The Humanistic Approach
3	Social Influence: Milgram's Research
3	Social Influence: Asch's Research
4	Memory: Eyewitness Testimony (Misleading Information)
5	Memory: Eyewitness Testimony (Anxiety)

Week 1: Approaches in Psychology

In this unit, you will look at the main perspectives in psychology. The following tasks will introduce you to two of the main perspectives/approaches in psychology: The Behaviourist Approach and Social Learning Theory. You will also later look at the Biological Approach.

We are going to start with the **behaviourist approach** (this is your first title). This is one of the most famous approaches in psychology and it was first established in the early 20th century. It can be split into **classical conditioning** and **operant conditioning**. The tasks below will introduce you to this approach.

- 1) Using your own research, make notes on the following theories/studies:
 - Classical conditioning
 - Pavlov's research on dogs and the key terms related to this
 - The Little Albert study
 - Extinction and generalisation
 - Operant conditioning
 - Reinforcement and punishment
- 2) Watch this [video](#) on classical conditioning and this [video](#) on both classical and operant conditioning.
 - Using all of the videos you have viewed so far, and your own research, explain both classical and operant conditioning.
 - Explain 3 examples of classical and operant conditioning in everyday life.
- 3) Watch this [video](#) on the Little Albert study. How has classical conditioning taken place here? How did the baby learn to have a phobia or white furry object?
- 4) Listen to this [podcast](#) on B F Skinner. He is the psychologist who created the theory of operant conditioning (part of the behaviourist approach). Make notes on this.
- 5) Answer this exam question: *Describe the behaviourist approach in psychology [6 marks]* (Hint: For this question, you should describe classical conditioning for 3 marks and then describe operant conditioning for the other 3 marks)

Now you are going to learn about another important approach in psychology: **social learning theory** (new title). The tasks below will introduce you to this approach.

- 1) Using your own research, make notes on the following:
 - Social Learning Theory and the key terms related to this
 - Bandura's Bobo Doll study
 - Mediational processes
- 2) Watch this [video](#) of Bandura's Bobo Doll study and answer the following questions:
 - How does this demonstrate the role of imitation in human behaviour?
 - What is the procedure of the study?
 - What are the findings of the study?
- 3) Listen to this [podcast](#) on Bandura's Bobo Doll study and make notes on this.
- 4) Write a paragraph explaining how social learning theory can explain the role of the media in human aggression? (e.g. think about how observing violence on TV/computer games could affect human behaviour and why)

Week 2: Approaches in Psychology

Last week, you looked at two of the main perspectives/approaches in psychology: The Behaviourist Approach and Social Learning Theory. This week, you will look at the Biological Approach and the Humanistic Approach. There are two more approaches that you would have to look at after that but, for now, we will only be focusing on these four.

The Biological Approach in Psychology

The biological approach attempts to explain behaviour in terms of different biological processes, including genes, hormones, neurotransmitters, evolution etc. According to the biological approach, the brain and the mind are identical, and brain physiology and biochemical imbalances can affect behaviour. Biological psychologists also believe that behaviour can be inherited, as it is determined by genetic information.

The Genetic Basis of Behaviour

1. Watch the following [TED Talk](#) by psychologist Nancy Segal on twins. Answer the following questions using this talk and your own research:
 - a. What is the difference between identical and non-identical twins?
 - b. What percentage of their genes do identical twins and non-identical twins share?
 - c. Why are studies on twins so useful for psychologists to understand the genetic basis of behaviours?
 - d. Why is it even more fascinating for psychologists to research twins who have been separated at birth?
 - e. Do some research to find out what the term 'concordance rate' means in twin studies.
 - f. **Extension stretch and challenge:** How can we use concordance rates to work out whether a behaviour is genetically determined or not?

Nature vs Nurture

2. Using your own research, describe what is meant by the terms '**genotype**' and '**phenotype**'. Give examples of each in your answer.
3. Using your own research, write a four paragraph essay on the nature-nurture debate in psychology. You should include:
 - a. What we mean by the 'nature' side of the debate and give examples.
 - b. What we mean by the 'nurture' side of the debate and give examples.
 - c. How the diathesis-stress model shows the interaction between nature and nurture.
 - d. How epigenetics shows the interaction between nature and nurture.

Evolution and Behaviour

4. Watch this [video](#) on evolution and natural selection. Answer the following questions using the video and your own research:
 - a. What is natural selection?
 - b. What is 'survival of the fittest'?
 - c. What do we mean by 'adaptive' behaviours in the theory of evolution?
 - d. What role do genetics play in natural selection?
 - e. Give an example of three traits/behaviours that humans display that may be a result of evolution. Explain how they enable survival.

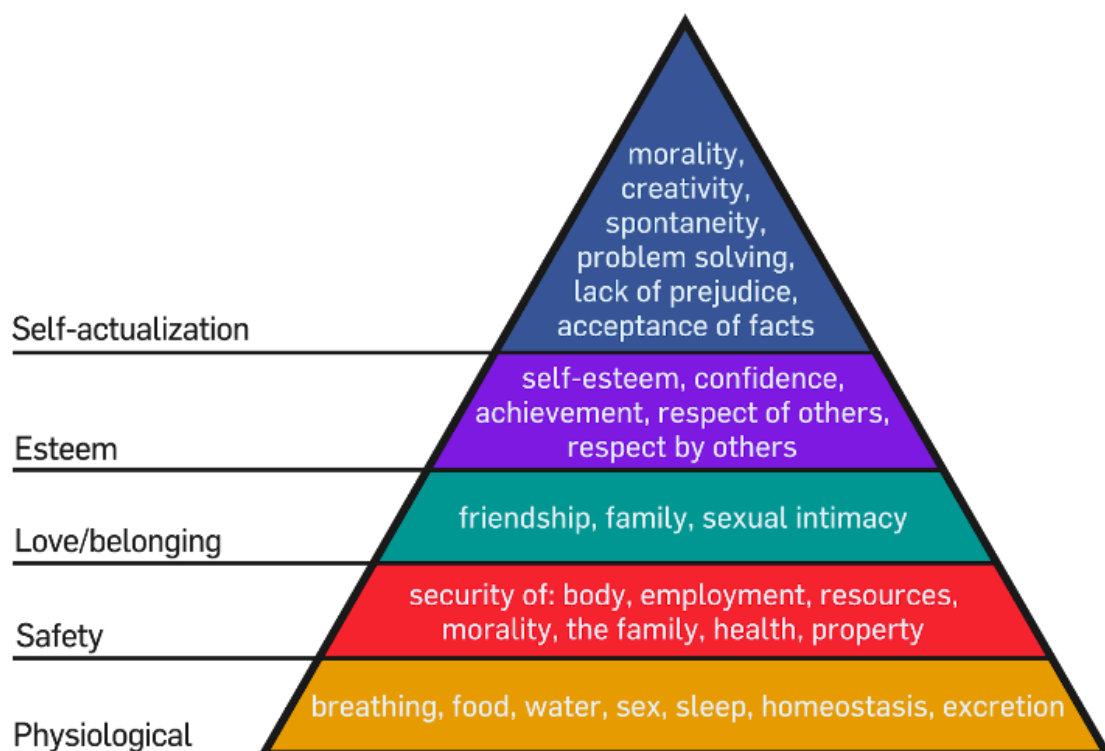
The Humanistic Approach in Psychology

The Humanistic Approach attempts to explain behavior based on our conscious experience and understanding of self. This approach claims that all individuals are unique and have an innate (inborn) drive to achieve their maximum potential. Therefore, focus must be on discussion of experiences.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Based on the hierarchy below, and your own research, match the statements with the correct level of need:

1. I have developed into the person I always wanted to be _____
2. I hope that they thought my presentation was interesting _____
3. I hope that my roof will survive the storm _____
4. I really hope I get invited to the party my classmates are having _____
5. I am extremely hungry _____



Self- Actualisation

Self- actualisation is the concept that all individuals have the ability to achieve their full potential and become the best version of themselves by fulfilling the hierarchy of needs. Identify 3 examples of individuals that have reached 'self- actualisation' and explain why you think they have achieved this level.

a)

b)

c)

Maslow's Theory

Using your own research into the humanistic theory, answer the following questions:

1. Why do humans have full conscious control over their bodies?
2. How does the humanistic approach differ from the biological approach of psychology?
3. What are some key factors that would limit someone's ability to achieve self-actualisation?
4. Do you believe it is possible for people to reach self- actualisation? Why/ why not?

Week 3: Social Influence – Asch’s and Milgram’s Research

Now you will look at a different unit: Social Influence. Social influence is a topic in psychology, which examines how a person’s opinion, behaviour and emotions are affected by others. The social influence topic looks at four key areas including: conformity, obedience, minority influence and social change. This week, you will look at the work of influential psychologist, Solomon Asch, on conformity. As well, we will look at Stanley Milgram, his work in social psychology has been taught in universities and schools for decades and has paved the way for further research into social psychology. The following tasks will introduce you to their most influential work.

Task 1: Milgram (1963) - Obedience to Authority

1. Watch this [video](#) on Milgram’s experiment. Using the video, and your own research, answer the following questions:
 - a. Why did Milgram want to conduct research into obedience to authority? Which event in history made him want to conduct research in this area and why?
 - b. Outline the aim of this study.
 - c. Outline the procedure of this study.
 - d. Outline the findings of this study.
 - e. Outline the conclusions of this study.
2. Using your own research, outline 3 limitations (weaknesses) of this study. Make sure you include ethical issues such as psychological harm and deception in your limitations.

Task 2: Social Influence: Asch’s Research

Now you will look at a different unit: Social Influence. Social influence is a topic in psychology, which examines how a person’s opinion, behaviour and emotions are affected by others. The social influence topic looks at four key areas including: conformity, obedience, minority influence and social change. This week, you will look at the work of influential psychologist, Solomon Asch, on conformity.

1. Using your own research, write a definition of the term ‘conformity.’
2. Using your own research:
 - a. Explain what is meant by **informational** and **normative** social influence (these are two types of conformity).
 - b. Give an example of how informational and normative social influence may take place in real life.
3. Watch this [video](#) on Asch’s (1951) famous study on conformity.
 - a. Write down the procedure of this study (what they did).
 - b. Write down the findings of this study (the results).
4. Using your own research, how do the following factors affect how likely someone is

to conform to the majority? For each one, give a real life example of how it could make someone more or less likely to conform.

- a. Group size
 - b. Unanimity
 - c. Task difficulty
5. Listen to this [podcast](#) on Asch's research and the history of conformity research in psychology. Make notes on this.
 6. Complete this [online quiz](#) on conformity (don't worry if you can't answer all of the questions, you obviously haven't finished studying the topic in full so may not be able to answer them all yet!)
 7. Answer the following exam question:

Josie and Hana have just started new jobs and they are both keen to do well. Josie laughs a lot at the jokes her colleagues tell, even though she does not always find them very funny. Hana observes her colleagues closely and makes sure that she completes the work in the same way that they do, so that she does not make any mistakes.

Which girl's behaviour is being influenced by normative social influence and which girl's behaviour is being influenced by informational social influence? Justify both choices. [6 marks]

(Hint: there are three marks available for explaining which girl is displaying normative social influence and why, and then the other three marks are for explaining which girl is displaying informational social influence and why)

Week 4 and 5: Eyewitness Testimony - Misleading information and anxiety

Eyewitnesses frequently play a critical role in criminal investigations, yet there is good reason to suspect that their testimony may not be reliable. The importance of this issue is highlighted by the Innocence Project which claims that 72% of convictions overturned by DNA testing involves eyewitness testimony (EWT) that was not accurate.

There are various reasons why eyewitness testimony may not be accurate. The A Level specification explores the role of misleading information and anxiety in the accuracy of eyewitness testimony.

Week 4: Factors Affecting Eyewitness Testimony: Misleading Information

One of the most important factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimonies is misleading information. Misleading information is any information presented to a witness that may lead to a witness' memory of a crime being altered.

Elizabeth Loftus is the most famous psychologist in the field of memory and eyewitness testimony. It is absolutely essential that you are familiar with her work in this field for the A Level psychology course. Her experiments have shown us how memories can be changed by things that we are told after the event. Her research has been applied to the legal field and changed the way we use eyewitness testimonies in legal cases.

1. Watch this [TED Talk lecture by Elizabeth Loftus](#) on her work in this field. Make notes on this lecture.
2. Listen to [this podcast with Elizabeth Loftus](#). It explains one of the studies you have to know if you study psychology at A Level: the famous 'car crash' study. Make notes on this podcast, focussing on the 'car crash' study.
3. Loftus and Palmer (1974) carried out two studies into the effects of misleading information on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. Using your own research, outline the aim, procedure, findings and conclusions for the following two studies:
 - a. Loftus and Palmer (1974) experiment 1 - participants are asked how fast the cars were going using five different verbs.
 - b. Loftus and Palmer (1974) experiment 2 - participants were asked whether they saw any broken glass in the video of a car crash.
4. Watch/listen to the following and make notes on each one:
 - a. [Elizabeth Loftus on distorted memory](#)
 - b. [Misidentification: can you identify the criminal?](#) (click on 'read')
 - c. [The mind of a witness](#) (click on 'read')
 - d. [Changing faces](#)

Week 5: Factors Affecting Eyewitness Testimony: Anxiety

People often become anxious when they are in stressful situations, and this anxiety tends to be accompanied by physiological arousal (e.g. a pounding heart and rapid, shallow breathing). This anxiety and physiological arousal can have both positive and negative effects on an eyewitness' memory of an event.

1. Watch this [lesson](#) on the effects of anxiety on eyewitness testimony. This specifically covers the studies and theories you will need to know for the A Level psychology exam so this is an excellent introduction to the topic for you! Make notes on the following studies/theories described in the video. Try to include the procedure and findings for each:
 - a. Johnson and Scott (1976)
 - b. Yuille and Cutshall (1986)
 - c. The Yerkes Dodson Law
 - d. How does Pickel's (1998) study contradict the theory that anxiety affects eyewitness recall?
 - e. Explain the ethical issues related to Johnson and Scott's study.

2. Using your own research, outline the aim, procedure, findings and conclusion of Christianson & Hubinette's (1993) research into Swedish bank robberies and the effect of anxiety on eyewitness testimony.

3. The participants in this study ([video](#)) had just witnessed a staged (fake) stabbing. The participants did not know that it was staged and believed it was real. They were then questioned. Why do you think they struggled to recall the event accurately? Explain your answer using the research you learnt about in the lesson video in task 1.

Extension Resources for Paper 1 and Paper 2

Approaches

Resource	Synopsis
Abraham Maslow and Self Actualization Documentary	In this interview, Abraham Maslow, founder of the concept of Self Actualisation, discusses what he found when he set out to study psychological health rather than pathology in humans. His study of a select group of exceptional people led to his theory of the actualized personality
Evolutionary Psychology Podcast	Melvyn Bragg explores the basis for the idea of evolutionary psychology and the context for its development as a discipline. What can it tell us about how we behave, and can it be trusted?
Abraham Maslow and the Hierarchy of Needs Podcast	Claudia Hammond examines the Hierarchy of Needs, part of psychologist Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation: only when basic needs are met can humans aspire to higher achievements.
BF Skinner and Superstition in the Pigeon Podcast	Claudia Hammond explores the legacy of BF Skinner and behaviourism. One of the most famous psychologists of the 20th century, he remains one of the most controversial.
Carl Rogers and the Person-Centred Approach Podcast	Claudia Hammond explores Carl Rogers's revolutionary approach to psychotherapy, led by the client and not the therapist. His influence can be seen throughout the field today.
The Bobo Doll: Social Learning Theory Podcast	Claudia Hammond presents a series looking at the development of psychology. Albert Bandura's ground-breaking 1961 Bobo Doll experiment exposed the dangers of imitative behaviour.
Case Study: Little Hans Podcast	A phobia of horses developed by a boy living in Vienna in 1904 seemed unlikely evidence for the Oedipus complex. But for Sigmund Freud, this was the proof he had been waiting for.
Case Study: The Man with a Hole in His Head Podcast	Phineas Gage was a railway worker in 19th-century Vermont who survived a bizarre accident that changed him - and the study of neuroscience - forever.
Freud - Documentary	Analyses much of Freud's work.
What is Psychoanalysis: Is it weird? - Video	Quick introduction from the Freud Museum, London
What is Psychoanalysis: Sexuality - Video	Quick introduction from the Freud Museum, London
What is Psychoanalysis: The Id, Ego and Superego - Video	Quick introduction from the Freud Museum, London

Memory

Resource	Synopsis
Elizabeth Loftus: How Reliable is your memory? - TED Talk	Psychologist Elizabeth Loftus studies memories. More precisely, she studies false memories, when people either remember things that didn't happen or remember them differently from the way they really were. It's more common than you might think, and Loftus shares some startling stories and statistics -- and raises some important ethical questions.
Making a Murderer Brendon Dassey interview (leading questions) - documentary	Brendan Dassey Police Interview on March 1, 2006 Part #1. Brendan Dassey is from Wisconsin America and has been found guilty of the murder of Theresa Halbach alongside his uncle Steven Avery. Both to this day still protest their innocence, it is believed Dassey was coerced into a false confession in his original interview found here.
Anaesthetic could be used to wipe bad memories and phobias from people's minds - article	Asking patients to recall unpleasant memories shortly before being knocked out made it harder to recall those memories the next day
Elizabeth Loftus and Eyewitness Testimony - podcast	Claudia Hammond meets Elizabeth Loftus, the psychologist whose research into eyewitness testimony and the malleability of memory changed how police and courts deal with witnesses.
Case Study: HM - The Man Who Couldn't Remember - podcast	A man known as HM provided the key to one of the mysteries of the human brain. Having lost his own memory through surgery for epilepsy, HM revealed how new memories are formed.

Social Influence

<p>The Stanford prison experiment - documentary</p>	<p>This is a documentary on Zimbardo's famous study on conformity to social roles. It is one of the most famous studies in psychology. Unfortunately this is no longer in the spec however it is still very interesting!</p>
<p>The Stanford Prison Experiment - podcast</p>	<p>Claudia Hammond looks at the development of the science of psychology. When Philip Zimbardo set up a mock prison, he had no idea that the resulting behaviour would be so extreme.</p>
<p>Zimbardo: The Psychology of Evil - TED Talk</p>	<p>In this talk, Zimbardo explains how easy it is for 'good' people to turn 'bad'.</p>
<p>Conformity to social roles - BBC Prison Experiment - documentary</p>	<p>This is a BBC replication of Zimbardo's famous study. Only view this once you have read about Zimbardo's original study in depth. This study goes against Zimbardo's findings.</p>
<p>Milgram Experiment - full documentary</p>	<p>Milgram's study into obedience is one of the most famous studies ever conducted in the discipline of social psychology. Milgram wanted to find out how and why so many ordinary German citizens could commit the horrific acts of the holocaust in Nazi Germany, and why they decided to obey authority figures. This full documentary outlines the experiment in detail.</p>
<p>Julian Rotter and Locus of Control - podcast</p>	<p>Claudia Hammond meets Julian Rotter, who promoted personality theory in clinical psychology with his test to measure if a subject has an internal or external locus of control.</p>
<p>Solomon Asch - Conformity - podcast</p>	<p>Claudia Hammond looks at the conformity experiments conducted by the American social psychologist, Solomon Asch.</p>
<p>Derek Abbot - Should you Trust Unanimous Decisions? - TED Talk</p>	<p>Imagine a police lineup where ten witnesses are asked to identify a bank robber they glimpsed fleeing the scene. If six of them pick the same person, there's a good chance that's the culprit. And if all ten do, you might think the case is rock solid. But sometimes, the closer you start to get to total agreement, the less reliable the result becomes. Derek Abbott explains the paradox of unanimity.</p>

Clinical Psychology & Mental Health

Resource	Synopsis
<p>The Secret Life of the Manic Depressive - documentary (Part 1) (Part 2)</p>	<p>Stephen Fry presents this documentary exploring the disease of manic depression; a little understood but potentially devastating condition affecting an estimated two percent of the population.</p>
<p>Stacey Dooley - On the Psych Ward - documentary</p>	<p>Every year thousands of young people are brought to mental health units across the UK to seek treatment. Latest estimates put the number of people who suffer from a mental health condition at one in three, and most first experience problems when they are young.</p> <p>Stacey is going to work in Springfield Hospital, one of the oldest mental health units in the UK, to see what life is really like on the front line of mental health services. More than just observing, she will be working directly with staff, dealing with patients, and taking part in making incredibly tough decisions about what is best for patients.</p>
<p>Joseph Wolpe and Systematic Desensitisation - podcast</p>	<p>Claudia Hammond explores Joseph Wolpe's treatment for phobias which can be seen as the foundation for today's cognitive behaviour therapy.</p>
<p>Case Studies in Abnormal Psychology, 9th Edition - book</p>	<p>Most textbooks on abnormal psychology include short descriptions of actual clinical cases. However, those presentations are necessarily brief and too fragmented for students to gain a clear understanding of the unique complexities of a person's troubled life.</p>
<p>The Truth About Depression - documentary</p>	<p>Stephen Nolan lifts the curtain on the stigma surrounding depression and gains a better understanding of this illness. He meets people whose life is a constant battle against it and examines the science behind this potentially life-threatening condition.</p>
<p>OCD: The War Inside - documentary</p>	<p>This feature documentary explores the daily lives of individuals living with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), a misunderstood anxiety disorder characterized by intrusive thoughts, nagging fears and ritualistic behaviour.</p>
<p>Primal Fear: phobias - documentary</p>	<p>Jackie is petrified of feathers, Ryan can't fly, and Trevor's scared of heights. Irrational phobias are damaging their lives. Will the latest treatments help like dropping them in at the deep.</p>

Attachment

Resource	Synopsis
From Romania With Love - documentary	In 1990 Romania, the world was stunned by what was revealed: Images of orphanages, of starving, freezing unloved children, suffering shocking untold misery.
Genie 'wild child' - documentary	From the TLC documentary 'Wild Child :The Story Of Feral Children'.
How The Children Of Working Moms Feel About Them Now - documentary	One recent study from Harvard found that daughters who had working mothers grew up to accomplish more at work, earn more money and climb higher on the corporate ladder than the daughters of stay-at-home moms.
The biology of dads (role of the father in attachment) - documentary	Every child needs a father is a phrase heard often enough, but is there any evidence to support it? In this enlightening documentary, child psychologist Laverne Antrobus goes on a quest to discover why a dad's relationship with his offspring is so important. She uncovers fascinating new research which is shedding light onto the science of fatherhood.
Childhood trauma scars the brain and boosts depression risk - article	This article discusses the link between early trauma and depression
Unconditional Love - podcast	Three episode podcast discussing controversial therapy used by couple to encourage their child to love them
Fathers and daughters - podcast	A look at how fathers can have a profound influence on how their daughters navigate the world, and what impact having a daughter can have on a father.
Harlow's Monkeys - podcast	Claudia Hammond revisits Harry Harlow's surrogate mothers experiment with monkeys, that revolutionised parenting. From August 2009.
Mary Ainsworth - podcast	Claudia Hammond looks at Ainsowrth's observational work in Africa influencing perceptions of the parent-child relationship.
Maternal Deprivation - documentary	This film is part of the data collected by a French research unit studying the effect of maternal deprivation in young children between one and two-and-a-half-years old. All had been reared in institutions without the opportunity for a stable and intimate relationship with one primary caregiver. All had been moved from one institution to another several times.

Biopsychology

Listening to the music you love will make your brain release more dopamine - article	<p>A new study has found that dopamine — a neurotransmitter that plays an important role in our cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functioning — plays a direct role in the reward experience induced by music.</p>
The Brain: A Secret History - documentary	<p>In a compelling and at times disturbing series, Dr Michael Mosley explores the brutal history of experimental psychology.</p>
The Human Mind - documentary	<p>In this three-part documentary, Robert Winston explores all aspects of the human mind – from how we learn, to how we’re able to recognise faces and what makes one person ‘click’ with another.</p>
Why memories of music cannot be lost to Alzheimer's and dementia - article	<p>Talks about how alzheimer's patients are able to recognise music from their youth</p>
Brain Region Explains Why Aphasia Patients Can Understand Written, But Not Spoken Words - article	<p>Research on aphasia</p>
There is only weak evidence that mirror neurons underlie human empathy - article	<p>Review and meta analysis</p>
Neurotransmission: The Synapse - Video	<p>Video explaining synaptic transmission.</p>
Phineas Gage Case Study - video	<p>Video explaining the case of Phineas Gage and localisation of function in the brain.</p>
The Fight or Flight Response - TED Talk	<p>A talk on the fight or flight response.</p>
Body Clock: What makes us tick? - documentary	<p>A former commando spends ten days locked in a nuclear bunker, with no way of telling the time, to find out how best to manage our body clock and improve our health.</p>
The Truth about sleep - documentary	<p>We are one of the most sleep-deprived countries in the world. In The Truth About Sleep, insomniac Michael Mosley finds out what happens if we don't get enough sleep and looks at surprising solutions to help us get more.</p>

Research Methods

The Hawthorne Effect - podcast	Claudia Hammond examines the 1920s experiment in a Chicago factory giving rise to a classic textbook phenomenon. From August 2009.
Psychologists Love To Report “Marginally Significant” Results, According To A New Analysis - article	Promotes discussion around significance in psychological research.
Tutor2u Research Methods - resources	Tutor2u is a company that provides a variety of different free resources to support students in their A Level psychology studies. This is their research methods series.
Big Data is Better Data - TED Talk	Self-driving cars were just the start. What's the future of big data-driven technology and design? In a thrilling science talk, Kenneth Cukier looks at what's next for machine learning -- and human knowledge.

