**WILMSLOW HIGH SCHOOL**

***A Level Psychology Reading List***

*If you have a genuine interest in psychology then you'll love some of these books. As a department we strongly recommend that our A-Level students read around the subject in order to further their understanding and improve their chances of succeeding with university applications. Additional reading ought to be enjoyable so if you're finding something really dull try something different, but please, please read something, it will make you a better psychologist and give you something to discuss in Costa!*

*Most of these titles are available in the Library. If you come across a book that isn’t on the list that you would like to read (or that you have read and enjoyed) then please let your psychology teacher know and we'll try and get it ordered.*

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**A secure base – John Bowlby**

As Bowlby himself points out in his introduction to this seminal childcare book, to be a successful parent means a lot of very hard work. Giving time and attention to children means sacrificing other interests and activities, but for many people today these are unwelcome truths. Bowlby’s work showed that the early interactions between infant and caregiver have a profound impact on an infant's social, emotional, and intellectual growth. Controversial yet powerfully influential to this day, this classic collection of Bowlby’s lectures offers important guidelines for child rearing based on the crucial role of early relationships.

**Blink – Malcolm Gladwell**

An art expert sees a ten-million-dollar sculpture and instantly spots it's a fake. A marriage analyst knows within minutes whether a couple will stay together. A fire-fighter suddenly senses he has to get out of a blazing building. A speed dater clicks with the right person...

This book is all about those moments when we 'know' something without knowing why. Here Malcolm Gladwell explores the phenomenon of'blink', showing how a snap judgement can be far more effective than a cautious decision. By trusting your instincts, he reveals, you'll never think about thinking in the same way again.

**Classic case studies in psychology – Geoff rolls**

Have you heard about the man who lived with a hole in his head? Or the boy raised by his parents as a girl? From the woman with multiple personalities, to the man with no brain, this collection of case studies provides a compelling insight into the human mind. This is a fascinating collection of human stories. Some are well-known case studies that have informed clinical practice, others are relatively unknown.

**Coming of age in Samoa – Margaret Mead**

The classic psychological study of what it was like in the 1920s for girls growing up in the primitive culture of the Samoan Islands.

**Freud a very short introduction – Anthony Storr**

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) revolutionized the way in which we think about ourselves. From its beginnings as a theory of neurosis, Freud developed psycho-analysis into a general psychology which became widely accepted as the predominant mode of discussing personality and interpersonal relationships.

**Genie: A scientific tragedy – Russ Rymer**

An account of one young woman's emergence from a tragic childhood describes how after spending her early years strapped in a chair in a closed room, Genie learned to walk, chew, and speak, with the help of the scientists who adopted her.

**How the Mind Works - Steven Pinker (Penguin, 1997)**

In this delightful, acclaimed bestseller, one of the world’s leading cognitive scientists tackles the workings of the human mind. What makes us rational―and why are we so often irrational? How do we see in three dimensions? What makes us happy, afraid, angry, disgusted, or sexually aroused? Why do we fall in love? And how do we grapple with the imponderables of morality, religion, and consciousness? How the Mind Works synthesizes the most satisfying explanations of our mental life from cognitive science, evolutionary biology, and other fields to explain what the mind is, how it evolved, and how it allows us to see, think, feel, laugh, interact, enjoy the arts, and contemplate the mysteries of life.

**Jung: A very short introduction – Anthony Stevens**

Though he was a prolific writer and an original thinker of vast erudition, Jung lacked a gift for clear exposition and his ideas are less widely appreciated than they deserve.   
  
In this concise introduction, Anthony Stevens explains clearly the basic concepts of Jungian psychology: the collective unconscious, complex, archetype, shadow, persona, anima, animus, and the individuation of the Self. He examines Jung's views on such disparate subjects as myth, religion, alchemy, `sychronicity', and the psychology of gender differences, and he devotes separate chapters to the stages of life, Jung's theory of psychological types, the interpretation of dreams, the practice of Jungian analysis, and to the unjust allegation that Jung was a Nazi sympathizer. Finally, he argues that Jung's visionary powers and profound spirituality have helped many to find an alternative set of values to the arid materialism prevailing in Western society.

**Madness Explained Richard Bentall(Penguin, 2003)**

Highly relevant to the Psychopathology module at A2, outlining the ongoing debate regarding the classification of the major forms of psychosis, focusing in particular on Schizophrenia, Depression and Anxiety Disorders.

**Mapping the Mind Rita Carter (Phoenix, 1998)**

An excellent coffee-table book in full colour and packed with illustrations on all aspects of brain function. Easy to dip in and out of and supplemented by articles from eminent psychologists and neuroscientists on their specialisms.

**Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View – Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo**

Volunteers are invited to a scientific laboratory under the pretense of participating in a study about the effects of punishment on learning. They are instructed by an experimenter to administer an electric shock of increasing intensity every time a 'learner', strapped to an electric conductor, makes a mistake. How many, if any, would go right up the scale to 450 Volts? The implications of Stanley Milgram's extraordinary findings (up to 65 per cent of subjects administered the full shock) are devastating. From the Holocaust to Vietnam and Iraq, "Obedience to Authority" goes some way towards explaining how ordinary people can commit the most horrific of crimes if placed under the influence of a malevolent authority. This title is presented with a new foreword by Jerome Bruner

**One flew over the cukoo’s nest – Ken Kesey**

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[Show Less](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Freud-Reader-Peter-Gay/dp/0099577119/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1404817768&sr=1-1&keywords=the+freud+reader)

Pitching an extraordinary battle between cruel authority and a rebellious free spirit, Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is a novel that epitomises the spirit of the sixties. This Penguin Classics edition includes a preface, never-before published illustrations by the author, and an introduction by Robert Faggen.

Tyrannical Nurse Ratchet rules her ward in an Oregon State mental hospital with a strict and unbending routine, unopposed by her patients, who remain cowed by mind-numbing medication and the threat of electroshock therapy. But her regime is disrupted by the arrival of McMurphy - the swaggering, fun-loving trickster with a devilish grin who resolves to oppose her rules on behalf of his fellow inmates. His struggle is seen through the eyes of Chief Bromden, a seemingly mute half-Indian patient who understands McMurphy's heroic attempt to do battle with the powers that keep them imprisoned. The subject of an Oscar-winning film starring Jack Nicholson, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* an exuberant, ribald and devastatingly honest portrayal of the boundaries between sanity and madness.

**Opening Skinner’s box – Lauren Slater**

Through ten examples of ingenious experiments by some of psychology's most innovative thinkers, Lauren Slater traces the evolution of the century's most pressing concerns—free will, authoritarianism, conformity, and morality.

**Prozac nation – Elizabeth wurtzel**

An account, both harrowing and amusing, of the author's dependence on Prozac, prescribed for her after a series of suicide attempts and breakdowns. She describes her experiences and her determination to get herself off medication.

**Psy Q – Ben Ambridge**

Psychology 101: a collection of entertaining experiments, quizzes, jokes, and interactive exercises

**Quirkology by Richard Wiseman**

A good pop psychology book and includes some studies we encounter in class as well as an analysis of the world’s funniest joke and what makes some people luckier than others. It also explains why there seem to be so many people in professions related to their surname.

**Shoot the damn dog: a memoir of depression – Sally Brampton**

"Shoot the Damn Dog" blasts the stigma of depression as a character flaw and confronts the illness Winston Churchill called 'the black dog', a condition that humiliates, punishes and isolates its sufferers. It is a personal account of a journey through (and out of) severe depression, as well as being a practical book, offering ideas about what might help. With its raw, understated eloquence, it will speak volumes to anyone whose life has been haunted by depression, as well as offering help and understanding to those whose loved ones suffer from this terrifying condition.

**The art of choosing – Sheena Iyengar**

Every day we make choices. Coke or Pepsi? Save or spend? Stay or go?

Whether mundane or life-altering, these choices define us and shape our lives. Sheena Iyengar asks the difficult questions about how and why we choose: Is the desire for choice innate or bound by culture? Why do we sometimes choose against our best interests? How much control do we really have over what we choose? Her award-winning research reveals that the answers are surprising and profound. In our world of shifting political and cultural forces, technological revolution, and interconnected commerce, our decisions have far-reaching consequences. Use this book as your companion and guide for the many challenges ahead.

**The bell jar – Sylvia Plath**

Esther Greenwood is at college and is fighting two battles, one against her own desire for perfection in all things - grades, boyfriend, looks, career - and the other against remorseless mental illness. As her depression deepens she finds herself encased in it, bell-jarred away from the rest of the world. This is the story of her journey back into reality. Highly readable, witty and disturbing, The Bell Jar is Sylvia Plath's only novel and was originally published under a pseudonym in 1963. What it has to say about what women expect of themselves, and what society expects of women, is as sharply relevant today as it has always been.

**The Blank Slate – Steven Pinker (Penguin, 2003)**

A brave book, confronting the moralistic and political minefield of genetic determinism as it relates to the mind. If you are interested in psychology in relation to the nature-nurture debate then start here to have your misconceptions dispelled.

**The freud reader – Peter Gay**

Freudian thought permeates virtually every aspect of 20th century life. To understand Freud is to explore not only his scientific papers but also his vivid writings on art, literature, politics, religion and culture.

*The Freud Reader* is the first single-volume work to bring together in accessible form Freud's ideas as a scientist, humanist, doctor and philosopher. It contains fifty-one key texts, spanning Freud's entire career from early case histories through his work on dreams, essays on sexuality, and on to his late writings, including *Civilisation and Its Discontents*.

Peter Gay, a leading scholar of Freud, has put together this selection to provide a full portrait of Freud's thought. He has also written clear introductions to the selected texts and a general introduction which places the man and his work in the context of his time and culture.

**The Happiness Hypothesis - Jonathan Haidt (Arrow, 2006)**

A book that attempts to explain many of the claims to happiness expounded by ancient wisdom in light of modern psychological discovery. A positivistic manifesto on how to be a happier person.

**The Interpretation of Dreams Sigmund Freud (Oxford Uni Press, 1999)**

Freud’s classic book on dream interpretation, neurosis and psychosis is packed with interesting case notes and explanations of his ground-breaking theory in the making. A must for anyone with an interest in sleep and dreams.

**The invisible gorilla – Christopher Chabris**

If a gorilla walked out into the middle of a basketball pitch, you’d notice it. Wouldn’t you? If a serious violent crime took place just next to you, you’d remember it, right? The Invisible Gorilla is a fascinating look at the unbelievable, yet routine tricks that your brain plays on you.

In an award-winning and groundbreaking study, psychologists Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons asked volunteers to watch a 60-second film of a group of students playing basketball and told them to count the number of passes made. About halfway through, a woman dressed head to toe in a gorilla outfit slowly moved to centre screen, beat her chest at the camera, and casually strolled away. Unbelievably, almost half of the volunteers missed the gorilla.

As this astonishing and utterly unique new book demonstrates, exactly the same kind of mental illusion that causes people to miss the gorilla can also explain why many other things, including why:

• honest eyewitness testimony can convict innocent defendants

• expert money managers suddenly lose billions

• Homer Simpson has much to teach you about clear thinking

Insightful, witty, and fascinating, The Invisible Gorilla closely examines the false impressions that most profoundly influence our lives and gives practical advice on how we can minimize their negative impact.

**The Lucifer effect: How good people turn evil – Philip Zimbardo**

In *The Lucifer Effect*, the award-winning and internationally respected psychologist, Philip Zimbardo, examines how the human mind has the capacity to be infinitely caring or selfish, kind or cruel, creative or destructive. He challenges our conceptions of who we think we are, what we believe we will never do - and how and why almost any of us could be initiated into the ranks of evil doers.

At the same time he describes the safeguards we can put in place to prevent ourselves from corrupting - or being corrupted by - others, and what sets some people apart as heroes and heroines, able to resist powerful pressures to go along with the group, and to refuse to be team players when personal integrity is at stake.

Using the first in-depth analysis of his classic Stanford Prison Experiment, and his personal experiences as an expert witness for one of the Abu Ghraib prison guards, Zimbardo's stimulating and provocative book raises fundamental questions about the nature of good and evil, and how each one of us needs to be vigilant to prevent becoming trapped in the 'Lucifer Effect', no matter what kind of character or morality we believe ourselves to have.

**The man who mistook his wife for a hat – Oliver Sacks**

Oliver Sacks has become the world’s best-known neurologist. His case studies of broken minds offer brilliant insight into the mysteries of consciousness’ *Guardian*

In his most extraordinary book, Oliver Sacks recounts the stories of patients lost in the bizarre, apparently inescapable world of neurological disorders. These are case studies of people who have lost their memories and with them the greater part of their pasts; who are no longer able to recognize people or common objects; whose limbs have become alien; who are afflicted and yet are gifted with uncanny artistic or mathematical talents. In Dr Sacks’s splendid and sympathetic telling, each tale is a unique and deeply human study of life struggling against incredible adversity.

‘Populated by a cast as strange as that of the most fantastic fiction . . . Dr Sacks shows the awesome powers of our mind and just how delicately balanced they have to be’ *Sunday Times*

‘This book is for everybody who has felt from time to time that certain twinge of self-identity and sensed how easily, at any moment, one might lose it’ *The Times*

‘A gripping journey into the recesses of the human mind’ *Daily Mail*

**The portable Jung – Joseph Campbell**

This comprehensive collection of writings by the epoch-shaping Swiss psychoanalyst was edited by Joseph Campbell, himself the most famous of Jung's American followers. It comprises Jung's pioneering studies of the structure of the psyche—including the works that introduced such notions as the collective unconscious, the Shadow, Anima and Animus—as well as inquries into the psychology of spirituality and creativity, and Jung's influential "On Synchronicity," a paper whose implications extend from the I Ching to quantum physics. Campbell's introduction completes this compact volume, placing Jung's astonishingly wide-ranging *oeuvre* within the context of his life and times.

**The Psychology Book – Nigel Benson**

*All the big ideas, simply explained - an innovative and accessible guide to the study of human nature*

*The Psychology Book* clearly explains more than 100 ground breaking ideas in this fascinating field of science. How does the brain remember faces? What makes us choose one decision over another? Where does language come from?

With the use of powerful and easy-to-follow images, quotations from all the major thinkers, and explanations that are easily understandable, this book demystifies hard-to-grasp concepts and shows how these have shaped our knowledge of the human mind. All the schools of psychology are covered from cognitive to behavioural psychology making this ideal for students or for anyone with a general interest in this popular area.

If you're fascinated by the human mind then *The Psychology Book* will get you thinking.

**The Skeleton Cupboard – The making of a clinical psychologist – Tanya Byron**

*The Skeleton Cupboard* is Professor Tanya Byron's account of her years of training as a clinical psychologist, when trainees find themselves in the toughest placements of their careers. Through the eyes of her naive and inexperienced younger self, Tanya shares remarkable stories inspired by the people she had the privilege to treat. Gripping, poignant and full of daring black humour, this book reveals the frightening and challenging induction faced by all mental health staff and highlights their incredible commitment to their patients.

Powerfully moving and beautifully written, *The Skeleton Cupboard* shares the tales of ordinary people with an amazing resilience to the challenges of life

**The 21st Century Brain – Steven Rose (Vintage, 2006)**

An easy introduction to the neuroscience of the brain, addressing both the breakthroughs in our understanding of structure and function, and the potential developments of scientific knowledge of the mind in the future.

**Vox – Christina Dalcher**

Set in a United States in which half the population has been silenced, Vox is the harrowing unforgettable story of what one woman will do to protect herself and her daughter – an excellent book.

**The Dark side of the Mind: True Stories from My Life as a Forensic Psychologist – Kerry Daynes**

Welcome to the world of the forensic psychologist, where the people you meet are wildly unpredictable and often frightening.

Follow in the footsteps of Kerry Daynes, one of the most sought-after psychologists in the business and consultant in major police investigations.

**Reaching down the Rabbit Hole – Dr Allan H. Ropper and Brian David Burrell.**

This is a book about clinical neurology and the struggle of trying to heal the body when the mind is under attack. Follow the case studies of Dr Ropper as he tries to deduce what the problem is.

**Incognito: The Secret Lives of the Brain – David Eagleman.**

Why does your foot hit the brake pedal before you are conscious of danger ahead? Why do you hear your name is mentioned in a conversation that you didn't think you were listening to? Why is a person whose name begins with J more likely to marry another person whose name begins with J? Why is it so difficult to keep a secret? And how is it possible to get angry at yourself: who, exactly, is mad at whom? A thrilling subsurface exploration of the mind and all its contradictions. Explores how neuroscience can support a lot of Freud’s principles on unconscious processing.