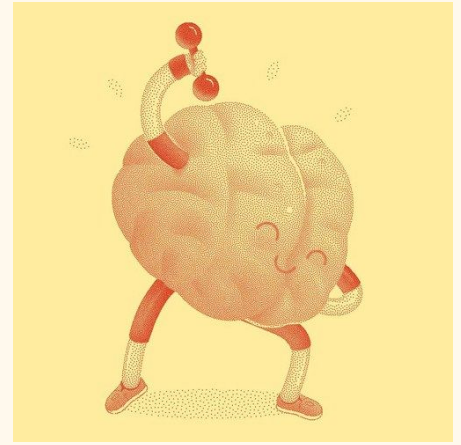


# Research Methods Paper

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## INTRODUCTION

Independent research allows AP Psychology students the opportunity to explore a topic of personal interest, and delve into greater detail on the chosen topic than we would have time to cover as an entire class. For this assignment you must select one topic of interest to conduct research over. Complete each part as listed below and adhere strictly to the directions.

## Paper Format

Each paper (one per semester), to be submitted electronically, should be no less than 4 pages typed, double-spaced with a font size of 12 (Times New Roman), not counting the cover page, abstract or reference pages. Your research should include a minimum of 5 references, with at least 2 references coming from either books or professional journal articles.

Your research papers are to be prepared in APA format, and as such should include:

1. 1" margins all around
2. Title page centered horizontally and vertically - includes title, name, date, class, teacher's name
3. Abstract - second page, a brief summary of your findings
4. References within the document in APA format (NOT footnotes, but author and year in parenthesis)
5. Reference/source page after the report (not numbered, but alphabetical by author's last name)

## **APA Format for References (fictitious samples, to show you the format):**

For a professional journal article (as it would appear in the bibliography - alphabetically by author last name):

Freud, S. (1933). The interpretation of dreams. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 5(2), 144-148.

For a book:

Erikson, E. (1958). Psychological and social development through the lifespan. (pp. 104-155). New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.

## **In-paper citations (using these two examples).**

Paraphrase the information, ending with the citation: "For many adults, unresolved issues from childhood may show up in the latent content of their dreams, when interpreted from a psychoanalytic point of view (Freud, 1933). In other cases, the difficulties may have more to do with their age and stage of development. In later adulthood, conflicts may arise from career difficulties, and the feeling that it has become too late to make major life changes (Erikson, 1958)."

## Information Checklist

Topics will be selected in class – only one student may select each topic. Your paper should address the following:

1. Give a brief background of the subject or problem.
2. Include a personal discussion of your thoughts, bias, feelings towards the subject or problem prior to the research you conducted.
3. What types of research methods have been used to study this topic/problem?
4. What is the significance of this topic/problem? Why is it important for people to understand? What areas of mental or physical health may it have an impact on?
5. What is already known about this topic/problem? Include a summary of no less than 3 studies that have been done over the past 50 years related to your topic. Identify **ALL parts of the scientific method** along with the variables (independent, dependent, and confounding) for each study.
6. What were the limitations that affected your efforts to research this topic/problem? Are there things that currently limit what we know about this topic/problem?
7. **APPLICATION: *How can your research be applied?*** Address the various possible audiences: by psychologists? By other mental health and/or medical professionals? By individuals and/or families? By institutions, governments or societies?
8. **Relevance:** is your research important to work going on currently in the field of psychology? How? Be specific.
9. **Conclusions:** what answers did your research provide for you? What are the unanswered questions, and/or the areas where further research is needed?

## Grading

- **Cover Page - 5 points**
- **APA Style and Format - 10 points**
- **Grammar and Spelling - 15 points**
- **Content - 100 points**
- **References - 10 points**

**Due Date for Research Paper:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Paper Topics

You must select one topic from the list below on the first come, first serve basis. To insure that you get a topic of interest, highlight your top 5 research topics, in order. That way, if your top choice has already been selected by someone else in the class, you can move down the list.

1. Addictions: which substance(s) most addicting? Which easiest/hardest to treat?
2. Role of the environment in the development of personality.
3. What do modern psychologists feel are the major weaknesses of Freud's psychoanalytic theories.
4. Addiction: influences of genetics vs. peers/environment
5. Anxiety: Causes, Symptoms and Therapy
6. Attachment Theory: relationship to parenting style & psychological health as an adult
7. Research the literature on the psychological and physical benefits of laughter.
8. The effects of the circadian rhythms on human beings.
9. The effects of cognitive dissonance on behavior/values
10. The Nightly Dream Cycle and Sleep Deprivation: impact on mental health
11. The Validity of Psychological Tests: how established? Which tests more valid? Less valid?
12. Collectivist vs. Individualistic Cultures: impact on positive self-esteem/sense of self.
13. Interpersonal Attraction: causes, gender differences; is there an "ideal"?
14. Gender differences and the Brain - separating actual differences from stereotypes
15. Endorphins and Happiness: production, role, implications for mental health
16. Learned Optimism/helplessness: how each come about; implications for mental health
17. Genius: Criteria, Characteristics and Types.
18. The Internet: positive/negative effects on our psychological health
19. How has Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization affected Psychology?
20. Childhood Trauma: impact on personality/role in personality disorders.
21. Race and Intelligence: The Scientific View
22. Possible Causes of Childhood Autism
23. How is Intelligence Measured? Reasons for controversy/debate
24. The Dual Roles of Genetics and Environment on Intelligence
25. Inherited Behavior - The Latest Research
26. Compare and Contrast the Learning Theories of B. F. Skinner and Jean Piaget
27. Alzheimer's Disease: causes, treatment & role lifestyle plays
28. Contact sports & degenerative brain disease
29. Workplace stress: environmental factors? Role of culture, of job type?
30. Multiple Personalities and the impact on relationships
31. Aging: changes to brain; implications, opportunities & challenges
32. Theories of Forgetting - explanation & implications for better memory
33. Does money buy happiness? Psychological health & socioeconomic status

34. Theories of Intelligence (Spearman vs. Gardner): implications for schools
35. The Theory of Persuasion - why it works/doesn't work (psychology behind it)
36. Bullying:causes, who gets bullied; what can parents/teachers do to stop it?
37. The Effects of Overcrowding on Human Beings
38. Subliminal Messages and How They can be Used to Influence Thought and Behavior
39. Current Experiments in Thought Control
40. The Psychological Effects of Torture
41. The Psychological Effects of War
42. The Theory of Memory Storage in the Human Brain: is there a physical basis? What happens to it?
43. The Function of Play in psychological health/well-being
44. The Psychological Benefits of Pets & Pet Therapy
45. Psychological Problems of Paraplegics
46. The Emotional Effects of Solitary Confinement
47. Behavior Patterns of Hyperactive Children - biological vs. environmental roots
48. The Stages of Grief According to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross: implications for coping with loss
49. Attractiveness & bias:are the attractive treated differently? (convictions, hiring, perceptions)
50. Habits: How are they Formed and How They Can Be Changed?
51. The Effects of Color on Mental States
52. The Theory of Boredom: mental/emotional determinants
53. Divorce:causes, psychological impact
54. Shyness in Adults:causes, consequences
55. The Principles of Primal Therapy:origins, modern uses
56. How Children Develop Gender Identification
57. Typical Mother-Daughter Conflicts in Modern America:causes, solutions
58. The Psychological Aspects of Obesity
59. The Psychological Profile of a Terrorist
60. The Clinical Uses of Hypnosis - risks vs. benefits
61. Significant Findings From Recent Research on Identical Twins
62. Eating Disorders: why are they so resistant to treatment?Role of gender?Brain changes?
63. Hate Crimes: impact on victims & on communities
64. Brain Damage and Behavior
65. Dreams & dream interpretation:why they occur?are interpretations valid?
66. The Limits of Artificial Intelligence
67. Compare and Contrast the Training, Scope, and Functions of Psychiatrists and Psychologists.
68. The Rorschach Test: How is it Administered and Evaluated?
69. The Psychological Problems of the Homeless.
70. How does social anxiety disorder effect the routine life of a person?
71. Cyber bullying: psychological impact and recommended responses

72. ADHD: Latest research and recommended treatment
73. The link between exercise and emotional health
74. Anger management: what makes psychological treatment effective?
75. Psychology of Flow: implications for workplace satisfaction
76. Psychological characteristics of long-lasting marriages
77. Creativity and Intelligence: what makes kids creative, and is it measured by intelligence tests?
78. US Cultural and Marketing Trends: do they threaten children's physical and mental health?
79. Violence in the Media: psychological effects on children
80. Birth Order: does it affect personality? First-born vs. middle child vs. youngest?
81. Psychological profile of the serial killer: what do they have in common - neurologically? Personalities? Family history?
82. Antisocial Personality Disorder: influences of nature vs. nurture; prominence in the criminal justice system
83. Brand New Mental Disorders: describing the disorders first appearing in the DSM 5 - implications for psychology?
84. Brain Mapping: dispelling myths & updating accuracy based on the newest maps. What really happens where?
85. Psychology Behind Attraction: how marketing professionals influence consumer choices.
86. What is emotional intelligence and how does it relate to success and life satisfaction?
87. The psychological benefits of forgiveness.
88. Optimism versus pessimism: impact on physical and psychological health
89. The psychopath's brain: is it structurally different from the normal brain?
90. Do we inherit or create our personalities? A review of the evidence.
91. The frequent selfie-taker: the social psychology behind social media use.
92. Disney movies giving false expectations in regards to relationships