

AP PSYCHOLOGY

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to introduce incoming AP Psychology students to various topics related to the course. **Students will have the choice of reading ONE of the following two books to prepare for the course.**

The first book, ***Blink***, by **Malcolm Gladwell**, is an accessible introduction to how the study of psychology can help us better understand ourselves and the world around us. Students are expected to read the book and answer the questions in order to be prepared for the course.

The second book, ***Flowers for Algernon***, by **Daniel Keyes**, is a fictional story that includes many themes that will be addressed in the course. This story reflects the more philosophical aspects of the study of psychology. Upon reading the story, students will write an essay reflection answering a prompt.

Instructions: Students will answer the following questions using complete sentences. Answers must be typed and demonstrate an understanding of the text, which will involve application as a means of supporting responses. **The assignment will be due on the first Friday of the semester.**

Any students that add the class during the first week of class will have until the end of the first three week grading period to turn in this assignment. **This assignment will count as two formative grades.**

Option #1 Blink--Students choosing to read this book, follow the instructions below.

First, listen to the podcast: Two Guys in Your Head--Choice, the episode can be found at the using the following link--

(<http://kutpodcasts.org/two-guys-on-your-head/vb-two-guys-on-your-head-choice>)

After listening to the the podcast, students will answer the two question listed below.

Part I: Reading Questions (Choose three questions to answer)

1. Explain the author's use of the metaphor, "thin slicing", as it relates to decision making. Give an example used by the author outside of the introduction. (**EVERYONE MUST ANSWER THIS QUESTION**)

Psychology Concept: Cognition/Decision Making

2. Explain what priming is and its impact on behavior. Use one of the experiments discussed in the text to support your answer.

Psychology Concept: Perception

3. Explain the Warren Harding Error and identify/explain an example used by the author.
Psychology Concept: Social Psychology
4. Use the problem of the “inverted steel pyramid” to explain “paralysis through analysis”. Your answer must demonstrate an understanding of the term **insight** as it relates to problem solving.
Psychology Concept: Cognition/Problem Solving
5. Use the example of the “Pepsi Challenge” to explain why the blind taste test is fundamentally flawed.
Psychology Concept: Classical Conditioning
6. Explain Paul Eckman’s theory regarding facial expressions. Describe the methodology he used to test his hypothesis. What is a microexpression? Explain Eckman’s research of these expressions and provide a specific example in which it was applied.
Psychology Concept: Emotion

Part II: Podcast Questions

1. **Discuss any aspect of the podcast that you found interesting. Be sure to describe what aspect of the discussion you found interesting as well as your reaction to it.**
2. **Reconcile the way the Malcolm Gladwell discusses choice with how choice is discussed in the podcast. Analyze any similarities or differences that exist in the way that choice is described in the book compared with the podcast.**

Option #2 Flowers for Algernon--Students choosing to read this book, follow the instructions below.

Instructions: Having read Flowers of Algeron carefully, write an essay in which you develop a position on the statement “If ignorance is bliss, then consciousness (awareness) can be miserable”.

Use appropriate, specific evidence to illustrate and develop your position, including your own opinion about the prompt, specifically whether or not you agree with it and the reasons why. Essays should be written in complete sentences and in paragraph form. Responses should range between 3-5 pages in length. Essays will be evaluated based on their thoughtfulness and application of the story.