

# Preparation for the Psychology

## A-Level Course

Mrs Greatbanks



**Congratulations!** You have made an important choice this year, to study A-Levels and to choose Psychology here at Tarporley. I want to ensure, throughout the year and beyond, that you look back and know that you made the right choice!

Reading this induction booklet and completing the induction programme will help you to be sure about the choices you have made.

You are about to embark upon an **intense** and **exciting** couple of years in which you will discover a whole new subject which hopefully will **inspire** you and help you to...

- understand more about effective learning and, thus improve your study habits
- enhance your self-knowledge, improve your relationships with your peers
- develop an empathic and compassionate outlook and an appreciation of human diversity
- support you to take risks and consider perspectives and outlooks that differ from your own
- develop crucial scientific research skills, which will allow you to evaluate evidence and devise and conduct research studies

This year, you will develop understanding and skills in the following areas...

- The history of Psychology and the approaches contained within it
- Psychological theories, research, terminology, concepts, studies and methods
- How psychological knowledge is generated through studying a range of psychological methodologies, designing and reporting psychological investigations, analyzing and interpreting data
- Skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation of information
- Ethical issues in Psychology, including the ethical implications of psychological research
- Ways in which psychological research can be applied to individuals, communities and the economy.

## Activity One: Key Terms

In studying Psychology over the next two years, you are going to encounter lots of new key terms.

**Get a head start by researching and finding definitions for these key terms.**

Term	Definition
Mind	
Brain	
Experiment	
Observation	
Self-Report	
Correlation	
Ethics	
Attachment	
Conformity	
Learning	
Abnormality	
Social Norms	
Role Model	
The Unconscious	
Cognitions	

## Activity Two: What kind of psychologist will you become?

Tick the answer which apply to you: a, b, c, or d



1. When recruiting participants for your experiment do you:
  - A. Give them all the information you can and explain it in detail
  - B. Give them a consent form to sign and then ignore it completely
  - C. Don't give them a consent form because you need to lie to them
  - D. Take absolute delight in lying your participants
  
2. When you design your experiment do you:
  - A. Try to avoid any research where someone might break a nail, never mind deception
  - B. Recruit students, sixth formers, and other powerless people because you think your research is the most important thing
  - C. Know that deception is part of your field of work but make sure everyone is looked after well and has counselling if they need it
  - D. Deception, that's how I make my living, go away minions...
  
3. Do you tell people at the outset that they have a right to withdraw from the experiment at any time?
  - A. Yes, I absolutely make it clear every single time
  - B. I try to, but sometimes I forget and I have to be reminded
  - C. No because it would ruin my experiment, they have to obey!
  - D. Excuse me, I have a contract to fulfil, are you mad?
  
4. Do you keep people's details confidential?
  - A. Yes, always because I am aware of their human rights and the data protection act
  - B. They are nameless, but I included details of their humiliation in my book, and on documentaries, but it was all done in the name of science and not for me, honest!
  - C. Yes, but there are still photos around
  - D. Are you stupid? I have to think of higher things like book deals, tours, after dinner speaking etc....
  
5. Do you protect your participants from physical or psychological harm?
  - A. I try very hard to do no harm
  - B. Most of them, but you have to break eggs to make an omelette
  - C. Yes, everyone had debriefing and I had counsellors on standby any time they needed it
  - D. Are you some kind of killjoy? Do you understand entertainment at all?

*Now add up your a, b, c, or d and find out which psychologist you are:*

## Activity Two: What kind of psychologist will you be?

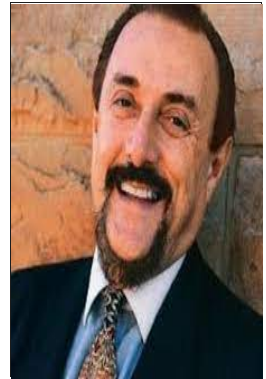


### MOSTLY A

You are most likely going to turn into **Professor Elizabeth Loftus**. Elizabeth works on making Eyewitness testimony better so that only the right people go to prison. Her experiment showed that Eyewitnesses are not very good at remembering details when under stress.

### MOSTLY B

You are most likely going to turn into **Professor Philip Zimbardo**. He did the famous Stanford Prison experiment to show how social roles change behaviour. He got so carried away with the experiment he lost sight of the effects on participants until his girlfriend, also a psychologist stepped in and stopped him. Dr Phil is everywhere on the net so he did rather well out of it all...



### MOSTLY C

You are probably going to turn into **Stanley Milgram**. His parents were Jewish Refugees during the war. He watched the trial of Adolph Eichmann whose defence for atrocities toward Jews was "I was only obeying orders" He set up an experiment to test this. He had to deceive participants but was uncomfortable about it

### MOSTLY D

You wish you could turn into **Derren Brown**. You know a lot about the application (some would say misapplication) of psychology. You are highly intelligent, but because your laboratory is the TV and your audience will pay, you are not subject to the ethical codes that the rest of the psychological world is constrained by.



## Activity Three: The Approaches In Psychology

Each approach in Psychology proposes a different explanation for behaviour.

Can you use the table below to apply the approaches to the case study of K?

### The Approaches in Psychology

Approach	Explains abnormal behaviour as ...	Key Features	How the approach studies behaviour	Treatments
<b>Biological</b>	Abnormality is caused by a physical malfunction of a bodily system.	All mental disorders are related to some change in the body.  Such changes influenced by: biochemistry, viruses, neuroanatomy, genetics.	Scientifically  Use of laboratory experiments, blood tests, EEG, etc	Tackle somatic (bodily) causes of disorder. These include:  - Neurosurgery - ECT - Drugs
<b>Psychodynamic</b>	Abnormality is a result of repression of unresolved conflicts between unconscious desires.	Behaviour is driven by unconscious desires. Conflict between desires is not resolved it may cause problems later e.g. phobia. Repression pushes traumatic events into unconscious.	Through individuals (case studies)	Psychoanalysis identifies and resolves unconscious, unresolved conflicts. Techniques include:  - word association - dream analysis
<b>Behavioural</b>	Abnormal behaviour is a result of learning.	Behaviour is learnt via stimulus response links. Reinforcement (positive and negative) of behaviour important – Operant conditioning. Classical conditioning involved in phobia development.	Through observations	Systematic desensitisation. Patients taught to replace maladaptive responses with desirable ones as they are gradually exposed to their fear.  Uses CBT as well
<b>Cognitive</b>	Abnormal behaviour is caused by faulty thinking patterns.	Maladaptive thought processes result in maladaptive behaviour. Extends behaviourist approach focusing on thinking between stimulus and response.	Through laboratory studies	Maladaptive thought processes identified and restructured to make them adaptive.  e.g. CBT

Here is an extract from a brief psychological assessment made by a psychiatrist:



*'K' is a 30-year old man who has had a long history of violence.*

*He was most recently arrested (for the fifth time) for an attack on another man in a crowded pub. 'K' claimed that the man had knocked his drink and laughed about it.*

*At the time of the arrest, 'K' was found to have abnormally high levels of testosterone (as well as high blood alcohol level).*

*He reported many experiences of seeing his father being aggressive and suffered himself in the form of beatings. 'K' said very little about his mother, who appeared to have been absent during this time, although this did not seem to be a concern for 'K'. 'K' was excluded from school on many occasions for bullying other children.*

*If 'K' had a philosophy on life, and it was 'never show weakness to others'*

*I recommend further detailed psychological assessment.*

## Activity Three: The Approaches In Psychology

	Why does K behave in the way he does?	How might this approach assess K?	How would they treat K's problems?
Biological			
Cognitive			
Behavioural			
Psychodynamic			

***Which approach do you believe to be the most likely cause of K's behaviour?***

## Activity Four: Classic Research in Psychology

### Piliavin et al (1969)

The aim of this study was to investigate whether train passengers were more likely to help someone who appeared to be ill, rather than one who appeared to be drunk.

The participants were approximately 4450 men and women travelling on a particular stretch of the New

York underground system between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays during April and June 1968. Two particular trains were selected for the study because they did not make any stops for about 7.5 minutes.

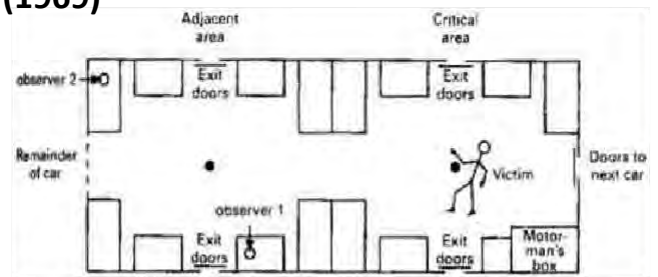
There were two male and two female researchers who boarded the train using different doors. The female researchers sat and observed while one of the male researchers stood and helped if necessary, while the other male was the victim and remained standing. The male victim always stood next to a pole in the centre of the train carriage. As the train passed the first station, the victim staggered forward and collapsed. If he received no help by the time the train slowed to a stop, the other male researcher helped him to his feet. At the stop the team got off the train. This was repeated 6-8 times a day.

The victim either smelled of alcohol (and carried a bottle wrapped tightly in a brown bag (drunk condition)), or appeared sober and carried a black cane (cane condition).

The female observers noted the race, sex and location of every passenger, seated or standing, in the train carriage, together with the total number of passengers and the total number who came to help the victim, plus their race, sex and location. The second female observer on the train did the same and both observers recorded comments made by nearby passengers.

The results showed that helping was very high. The cane victim received spontaneous help on 62 out of the 65 times the research was conducted, and the drunk victim received spontaneous help on 19 out of 38 times the research was conducted. On 60% of the 81 trials where spontaneous help was given, more than one person offered help.

**Answer the following questions:**



1. What variables did Piliavin et al. control to keep this study a fair test (so what was always kept the same)?
2. What did they find, and what evidence do you have for this?
3. Identify and explain at least two ethical issues that may have arisen in this research (ethics are the way in which you treat the people who take part in your research)

## Activity Four: Classic Research in Psychology

### Zimbardo et al (1971)

In 1971, psychologist Philip Zimbardo and his colleagues set out to create an experiment that looked at the impact of becoming a prisoner or prison guard. Zimbardo and his researchers set up a mock prison in the basement of Stanford University's psychology building, and then selected 24 students to play the roles of both prisoners and guards. The participants were selected from a larger group of 70 volunteers because they had no criminal background, lacked psychological issues and had no major medical conditions. The volunteers agreed to participate for a one- to two-week period in exchange for \$15 a day.



The fake (simulated) prison included three 6 x9 foot prison cells. Each cell held 3 prisoners and included 3 beds. Other rooms across from the cells were used by the prison guards and warden. One very small space was designated as the solitary confinement room, and another small room served as the prison yard.

The 24 volunteers were randomly assigned to being either in the prisoner group or the guard group. Prisoners were to remain in the mock prison 24-hours a day for the whole length of the study. Guards, on the other hand, had to work in three-man teams for eight-hour shifts. After each shift, guards were allowed to return to their homes until their next shift. Researchers were able to observe the behavior of the prisoners and guards using hidden cameras and microphones.

While the Stanford Prison Experiment was originally going to last 14 days, it had to be stopped after just 6 days due to what was happening to the students. The guards were abusive and the prisoners began to show signs of extreme stress and anxiety.

While the prisoners and guards were allowed to interact in any way they wanted, the interactions were generally hostile. The guards began to behave in ways that were aggressive and abusive toward the prisoners, while the prisoners became depressed. Five of the prisoners began to experience such severe negative emotions, including crying, that they had to be released from the fake prison early.

#### **Answer the following questions:**

4. Outline 4 characteristics of the sample (the group of participants used)
5. Identify and explain one strength and one weakness of the type of people that were used in this research.
6. What were the researchers looking for, and how did they measure this?
7. Suggest one way in which this research could be improved.



## Activity Four: Classic Research in Psychology

### Little Albert (1920)

The "Little Albert" experiment was a famous psychology experiment conducted by Watson and Raynor.

The participant in the experiment was a child that Watson and Raynor called "Albert B.", but is known popularly today as Little Albert. Around the age of nine months, Watson and Raynor exposed the child to a many animals and objects including a white rat, a rabbit, a monkey, masks and pillows and observed the boy's reactions. The boy initially showed no fear of any of the objects he was shown.



The next time Albert was exposed to the rat, Watson made a loud noise by hitting a metal pipe with a hammer behind Albert's head. Naturally, the child began to cry after hearing the loud noise. After repeatedly pairing the white rat with the loud noise, Albert began to cry simply after seeing the rat. That fear then generalised to the other white fluffy objects also.

You can watch (very old) video footage of this experiment on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt0ucxOrPQE&feature=related>

#### **Answer the following questions:**

8. How did Watson and Raynor create fear of the objects?
9. Which approach does the research support and why?
10. How could Watson and Raynor have tested their theory further?

## **Activity Five: Interview with a Murderer**

Access the Channel 4 documentary 'Interview with a Murderer':

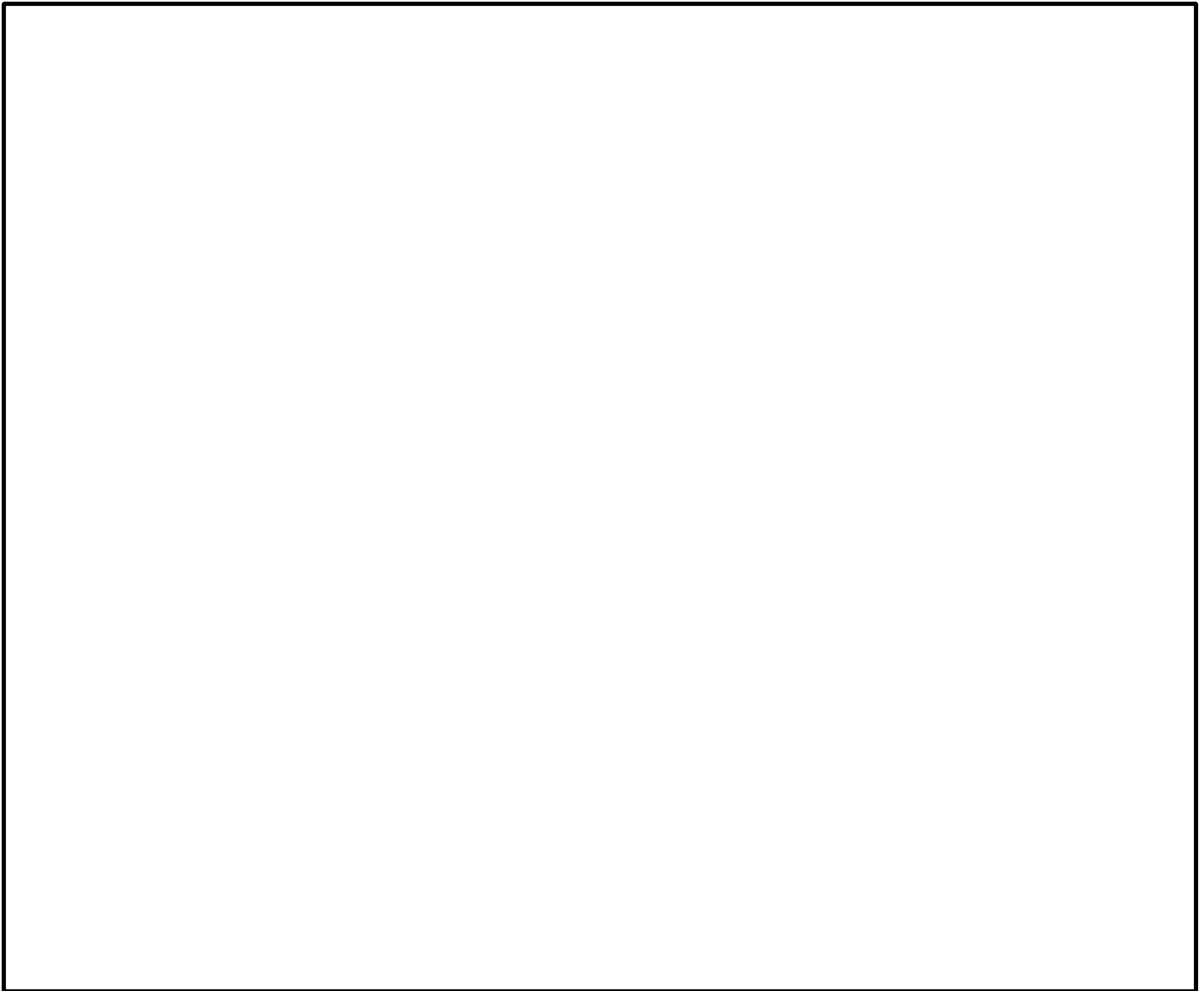
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVedXNE0H1U>

This programme follows criminal psychologist, David Wilson as he interviews the prime suspect in an unsolved murder from many years ago. The programme is thoroughly gripping and has lots of unexpected twists and turns!

Watch the show and write a reflection of your thoughts on it (minimum one page of A4).

It needs to include:

- Your first initial impressions of the case
- Did your opinions change during the programme - what made them change?
- Did you think David Wilson was biased in any way?
- What is your final judgement on the case – what evidence do you have to support your ideas?
- What further evidence would be needed in the case to give us a definitive answer?



## **Activity Six: Key Psychological Studies**

Use the following links to read the studies, most of which you will be learning about in your course (some are exam board specific).

For each of the five studies listed below summarise the following in 100-150 words:

- Background and Aim(s)
- Method (procedure and details of the sample)
- Results (this could be written or included on a graph – as long as you explain your graph)
- Conclusion(s)

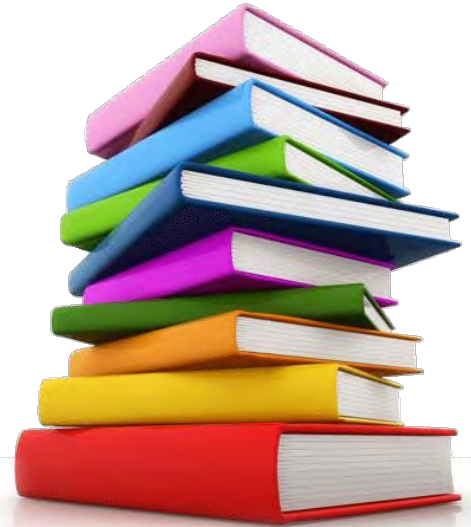
This information is called 'AO1'. It is all about describing or outlining something. This may be describing a study, an explanation or a model.

This element of the question will begin.... AO1 = Describe, Identify, Outline etc.

- 1) <https://simplypsychology.org/milgram.html> - Milgram
- 2) <https://www.simplypsychology.org/zimbardo.html> - Zimbardo
- 3) [https://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/1971\\_stigma/1973%20Rosenhan%20Being%20sane%20in%20insane%20places%20OCR.pdf](https://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/1971_stigma/1973%20Rosenhan%20Being%20sane%20in%20insane%20places%20OCR.pdf) – Rosenhan
- 4) <https://www.simplypsychology.org/loftus-palmer.html> - Loftus and Palmer
- 5) <https://www.simplypsychology.org/mary-ainsworth.html> - Ainsworth
- 6) <https://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-social.html#varhttps://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-social.html#var> - Asch

## Potential Reading List

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat – Oliver Sacks  
The Luck Factor and Quirkology – Richard Wiseman  
I am Eve – Chris Sizemore  
One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest – Ken Kesey  
We Need To Talk About Kevin – Lionel Shriver  
Heart of Darkness – Joseph Conrad  
Schindler’s List – Thomas Keneally  
Room – Emma Donoghue  
1984 – George Orwell  
The Selfish Gene – Richard Dawkins  
The Lucifer Effect – Philip Zimbardo  
The Student’s Guide to Neuroscience – J Ward  
Working Memory, Thought, and Action – Alan Baddeley  
Causing Death and Saving Lives – Jonathan Glover  
Genie – Russ Rymer  
The Blank Slate – Steven Pinker  
The Black Swan – Nassim Taleb  
Psychology in Football – Mark Nesti  
The Private Life of the Brain – Susan Greenfield  
Elephants on Acid – Alex Boese  
Jigsaw Man & Picking Up The Pieces – Paul Britton



## Potential Watching List

Making a Murderer  
A Virus Called Fear  
Criminal Minds  
Mystical Brain  
I Am Fishead  
Anima  
Secrets of Body Language  
Biology of Dads  
Batman Unmasked: The Psychology of the Dark Knight  
Stephen Fry: The Secret Life of the Manic-Depressive  
Beautiful Minds: The Psychology of the Savant  
How To Sleep Better?  
Child of Our Time  
Kim Peek: The Real Rain Man  
The Keepers



## Potential Articles

- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/finding-new-home/201806/why-do-some-songs-become-popular>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/finding-new-home/201805/narcissistic-eyebrows>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/talking-apes/201805/are-you-morning-lark-or-night-owl>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/modern-mentality/201806/sadness-does-not-discriminate-reflecting-kate-spade>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/when-your-adult-child-breaks-your-heart/201805/are-children-overprescribed-psychiatric>

## Ted talks/documentaries/You Tube clips

- 1) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3cOvLrixhY> – Trial of O.J. Simpson – BBC documentary. The collection of forensic evidence and investigation, including court cases.
- 2) [https://www.ted.com/talks/petter\\_johansson\\_do\\_you\\_really\\_know\\_why\\_you\\_do\\_what\\_you\\_do](https://www.ted.com/talks/petter_johansson_do_you_really_know_why_you_do_what_you_do)
- 3) [https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\\_loftus\\_the\\_fiction\\_of\\_memory](https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory)
- 4) [https://www.ted.com/talks/scott\\_fraser\\_the\\_problem\\_with\\_eyewitness\\_testimony](https://www.ted.com/talks/scott_fraser_the_problem_with_eyewitness_testimony)
- 5) [https://www.ted.com/talks/philip\\_zimbardo\\_on\\_the\\_psychology\\_of\\_evil](https://www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_on_the_psychology_of_evil)
- 6) [https://www.ted.com/talks/ben\\_ambridge\\_10\\_myths\\_about\\_psychology\\_debunked](https://www.ted.com/talks/ben_ambridge_10_myths_about_psychology_debunked)
- 7) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yT\\_F0dMZRU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yT_F0dMZRU) (Part 1)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3rHTm1YLxA> (part 2) – Stephen Fry - The Secret Life Of The Manic Depressive. BBC
- 8) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhLuEKZj1oo> – The Fritzl affair. Real crime documentary.
- 9) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJm7AhdGbDk> – Freud documentary (short)

## Things to Find out Ready for September

- 1) Psychology at Tarporley follows the AQA specification. Download and print off the specification for the exam board.
- 2) Add it to a folder that you will be using to store your notes from the course. Read the specification, highlight it (especially details of the exams - content and length etc.) and if you have any questions about the course make a note and ask me on day one. In your second year you will learn 'option' topics. I have decided which of these options you will learn about. Find out which options you will cover and read the specification requirements on those topics – ignore the options that you will not be learning about.
- 3) Look on the exam board's website for past papers and mark schemes. Get familiar with the exam papers and the types of questions you are likely to be asked. Look at the mark schemes, especially the 'generic' mark schemes, for longer questions. These 'generic' mark schemes can be found in the appendices or appear like a large table in the mark scheme booklet. This means that for longer questions, such as 16 marks for AQA, you will be marked in a similar way for skill, organisation and Assessment Objectives. The content will obviously be dependent upon the exam question given.
- 4) Download the command words from your exam board website. What does the word 'discuss' mean (for example)? This will give you an insight into how you need to structure your answers and the type of language you need to use.

A suggested link is provided:

AQA -

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/resources/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology/teach/command-words>

- 5) Download the key terms provided by your exam board.