



PSYCHOLOGY SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Dear incoming Queen's psychology students (EP and PPL),

First things first, congratulations! Congratulations for all your hard work in preparing for interviews and exams over the last year, and congratulations for getting an offer to study at Queen's College. Queen's is a truly special place, and we are all eagerly awaiting your arrival at the beginning of Michaelmas Term.

Please take the next few months as an opportunity to rest and relax before what will surely be a very busy year ahead. This quiet time is, however, also a perfect opportunity to do some broader reading about psychology and your other modules. It is also the only time for you to catch up on topics you did not cover at A level (see the reading list).

Below is your summer assignment. Please bring the work with you and hand it in to the College Porters at the Lodge as soon as you arrive at Queen's. Address the work to Dr Danielle Shore. We will discuss the topic (informally) in one of our meetings a few days after you arrive, so please be prepared to talk about the assignment in a small group setting.

First, please take some time to read Tim Squirrel's blog post: "How to write Undergraduate Essays" (<https://timsquirrel.squarespace.com/blog/how-to-write-undergraduate-essays>). He is a tutor in philosophy of science, so some of the things he writes about might seem a bit strange for psychologists, but the general points he makes are important.

Open the attached PDF copy of Aronson's "The Social Animal" and read Chapter 2 about conformity. I have given you the electronic version of the text as the book is very expensive, however, this means some of the pages are scanned in the wrong order. Please don't be deterred by this. Using this text as an inspiration, write an essay on the title: It is necessary to understand a person's social surroundings to understand their behaviour. Discuss.

Do not spend more than two days on this essay and write no more than 1,500 words.

Optional Reading (and I really do mean optional)

If you have some spare time on your hands, and want to start looking at some topics we will be covering in detail in your first term, these books will be helpful:

Smith, J., & Haslam, S. A. (Eds.) (2012). *Social psychology: Revisiting the classic studies*. London, UK & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[this book gives a great overview of some key studies done in social psychology. Social psychology will be the first area of psychology that you will be covering in lectures, and it will be on your reading list. If you want to read it pay special attention to chapters 4, 5, 9, 10 and 12, as these studies will be covered extensively in your lectures]

Slater, A., & Quinn, P. (Eds.) (2012). *Developmental psychology: Revisiting the classic studies*. London, UK & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[this book gives an extensive overview of some key studies done in developmental psychology, the second area of psychology you will be studying.]

If you decide to read some psychology books on your holiday, here are two that are easy to read, entertaining but also informative:

Slater, L. (2005). *Opening Skinner's Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the 20th Century*. W. W. Norton & Company

[entertaining book, giving you a good overview of some of the most influential psychological studies and concepts]

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux [the classic!]

Kind regards,

Danielle M Shore

College Lecturer in Psychology, The Queen's College