UNIT 9

Social Psychology

8–10% AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~10–11 CLASS PERIODS
Remember to go to AP Classroom to assign students the online Personal Progress Check for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the Personal Progress Check provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit’s topics and skills.

**Personal Progress Check 9**

*Multiple-choice: ~20 questions*

*Free-response: 1 question*

- Concept Application
Social Psychology

Developing Understanding

In this final unit, psychological concepts and theoretical perspectives are pulled together from throughout the course. Social psychology is the study of how other people and groups influence behavior and mental processes as well as how behavior and mental processes influence our experiences in social situations. Social psychology also involves the study of how our perceptions of social situations impact how we interact with others and how others interact with us. Social psychologists may focus on one aspect of social situations or interactions and may do so from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including other integrative perspectives.

Building Course Skills

As the course nears completion, students should be able to describe and explain behavior and mental processes within the context of social psychology. As they learn new social psychology theories, students will build on their knowledge of psychological theories in general. These theories specifically build on the biological, cognitive, and sociocultural theories discussed in earlier units. The history of social psychology is filled with studies that are no longer considered ethical. Through these missteps, students will learn how to conduct valid research, identify ethical flaws, and use appropriate data and data collection processes.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students often have difficulty using social psychology key terms and phrases correctly to answer questions posed as scenarios. Common examples of interchanged behaviors include conformity, obedience, and compliance. Students often struggle to provide the depth or breadth required to show mastery of the content. Teacher can provide opportunities for students to work with scenarios related to social settings and interactions. Students should give general characteristics of the behaviors associated with interactions and common responses to social stimuli. When the scenarios involve a certain type of research, students should be expected to define the method and write accurately about validity, ethics, and outcome.
# UNIT AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Suggested Skill</th>
<th>Class Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.1 Attribution Theory and Person Perception</strong></td>
<td>1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.</td>
<td>~10–11 CLASS PERIODS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.2 Attitude Formation and Attitude Change</strong></td>
<td>3 Analyze psychological research studies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.3 Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience</strong></td>
<td>3 Analyze psychological research studies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.5 Bias, Prejudice, and Discrimination</strong></td>
<td>1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.6 Altruism and Aggression</strong></td>
<td>1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.7 Interpersonal Attraction</strong></td>
<td>1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Go to [AP Classroom](https://apclassroom.collegeboard.org) to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 9. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.
# SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Sample Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td><strong>Quickwrite</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have students complete “The Fundamental Attribution Error Activity” from the TOPSS Unit Lesson Plan by Allyson J. Weseley. Provide students with a card or paper that includes an attribution scale on each side. On one side, have them circle the traits that they identify with. On the other, have them circle the traits that describe the teacher. Have students count the number of “depends on the situation” responses on each side and compare the two.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td><strong>Debate</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have students read about the Stanford Prison Experiment or watch an excerpt from the documentary. Then ask students to identify the research methods described and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Students can then debate the merits, ethics, and criticism of the experiment. Include the response to recent criticism published by Zimbardo and other researchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td><strong>Construct an Argument</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have students read the article “A Real-Life Lord of the Flies: The Troubling Legacy of the Robbers Cave Experiment.” Then ask them to identify the research methods described in the article and evaluate the ethics of the experiments. Ask them if the studies described offer any insights about group dynamics and, if so, what those insights are.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Unit Planning Notes

*Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.*
# TOPIC 9.1

## Attribution Theory and Person Perception

### LEARNING TARGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9.A</th>
<th>Apply attribution theory to explain motives.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.B</td>
<td>Articulate the impact of social and cultural categories on self-concept and relations with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.C</td>
<td>Anticipate the impact of self-fulfilling prophecy on behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXAMPLES

| 9.A.1 | Fundamental attribution error |
| 9.A.2 | Self-serving bias |
| 9.A.3 | False consensus effect |
| 9.A.4 | Confirmation bias |
| 9.A.5 | Just-world hypothesis |
| 9.A.6 | Halo effect |
| 9.B.1 | Gender |
| 9.B.2 | Race |
| 9.B.3 | Ethnicity |

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# TOPIC 9.2

## Attitude Formation and Attitude Change

### LEARNING TARGET

9.D
Identify important figures and research in the areas of attitude formation and change.

9.E
Discuss attitude formation and change, including persuasion strategies and cognitive dissonance.

### EXAMPLES

#### 9.D.1
Leon Festinger

#### 9.E.1
Central route to persuasion

#### 9.E.2
Peripheral route to persuasion

#### 9.E.3
Cognitive dissonance

#### 9.E.4
Elaboration likelihood model

### Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
TOPIC 9.3
Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience

LEARNING TARGET
9.F
Identify the contributions of key researchers in the areas of conformity, compliance, and obedience.

EXAMPLES
9.F.1
Contributions of Solomon Asch
9.F.2
Contributions of Stanley Milgram
9.F.3
Contributions of Philip Zimbardo

9.G
Explain how individuals respond to expectations of others, including groupthink, conformity, and obedience to authority.

Topic Planning Notes
Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
**TOPIC 9.4**

Group Influences on Behavior and Mental Processes

**LEARNING TARGET**

9.H
Describe the structure and function of different kinds of group behavior.

9.I
Predict the impact of the presence of others on individual behavior.

**EXAMPLES**

9.I.1 Bystander effect
9.I.2 Social facilitation
9.I.3 Social inhibition
9.I.4 Group polarization
9.I.5 Deindividuation
9.I.6 Diffusion of responsibility
9.I.7 In-group/out-group bias
9.I.8 Reciprocity norms
9.I.9 Social norms
9.I.10 Social traps
9.I.11 Prisoner’s dilemma
9.I.12 Conflict resolution
9.I.13 Superordinate goals
TOPIC 9.5
Bias, Prejudice, and Discrimination

LEARNING TARGET
9.J
Describe processes that contribute to differential treatment of group members.

EXAMPLES
9.J.1
In-group/out-group dynamics
9.J.2
Ethnocentrism
9.J.3
Prejudice
9.J.4
Bias
9.J.5
Discrimination
9.J.6
Scapegoat theory
9.J.7
Stereotype
9.J.1
Out-group homogeneity bias
9.J.1
Mere-exposure effect

Topic Planning Notes
Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
TOPIC 9.6
Altruism and Aggression

LEARNING TARGET
9.K
Describe the variables that contribute to altruism and aggression.

Topic Planning Notes
Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
TOPIC 9.7
Interpersonal Attraction

LEARNING TARGET

9.L
Describe the variables that contribute to attraction.

Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.