

High School Introduction to Psychology Course 2026-27 (Honors or AP Track)

amy.ruff@outlook.com

Amy Ruff's Homeschool Tutorials

(919) 219-4338

Prospectus: I'm going to make a bold prediction: **Introduction to Psychology will be your favorite class in high school!** I'm not predicting you'll be a psych major in college, but I am certain that you will be zealous to do your psych homework, engage in psych class discussion, & apply psych material in your everyday life—because this science is absolutely fascinating!

Whether you're already exposed to some of the psych literature on the market today or coming at this class as a complete novice, you will love the course-content combo of challenging & sensible, academic & practical that is **all about “you.”** If you've taken literary studies with me, then you know that *psyche* means “soul” in Greek & that the **human soul is comprised of three invisible—yet very real—ontological domains: intellect/mind, emotion/feeling, & volition/will.**

Intro Psych will develop your ability to **understand your own psyche & to identify different types of people** in order to **grasp the “why” behind each type.** **Understanding yourself better** helps you to **grow confidently into the person you are wired to be & to live conscientiously as the person you want to be.** We'll learn how **nature (one's wiring)** plays a central role in who you are in conjunction with the huge role **nurture/environment** plays.

Intro Psych is loaded with take-away wisdom! Since you'll spend your life on Earth communicating & working with other humans, Intro Psych is your chance to **increase knowledge about self & others:**

- Learn **brain science** that will **equip you to study smarter**—not harder—as a student & **to cultivate lifelong soft skills** that **derive from** intentionally developed **EQ/EI (emotional quotient/intelligence).**
- Practice **metacognition—thinking about how you think**—to **understand** the true “you” in “you do you” by **exploring** the following: **how you learn; your unique personality/temperament; whether you're intrinsically or extrinsically motivated; if you have a pessimistic or optimistic explanatory style; etc.**
- Identify biological basics to **optimize the performance of your psyche**—from **adequate sleep** that **enables learning & alertness** to **dietary self-discipline** that **fuels endocrine balance & function.** Doesn't that sound like **an ounce of prevention** serving as a **pound of cure?**
- **Comprehend developmental psych before launching into** the **critically important calling** of **parenting.**
- Notice signs of **abnormal human behavior**, so you can **be on the global team of humanity** to **help someone** when **psychological well-being** appears **compromised or challenged.**
- Learn **neurotheology** that aligns with being **created in the image of God**, who **loves each unique person.**
- Understand **neuroplasticity**—meaning our brain can **rewire** after **A, B, C trauma & daily anxiety.**

Student Testimony: “Mrs. Ruff's Intro Psych was a **fascinating, engaging, eye-opening** class.... Not only are the class **materials user friendly & interesting to study**, but Mrs. Ruff herself is an amazing teacher!

She is **incredibly kind & makes sure every student gets to participate & understand the material.**

The **HW...is never overwhelming...**[or] like busy work.

The online resources, worksheets, & tests are all **intended to ensure that students grasp the concepts.**

I would **absolutely recommend this class to high school students.”**

~ L.C. from Apex

Guest Lecturers: As time allows, Mrs. Ruff hopes to host some **guest lecturers to enrich our learning.**

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Let's Get Real with a Tragic Vignette of the Psyche:

A close friend from my undergrad years at Duke visited me one summer. Our discussions have always gone from deep to deeper. She is distinguished in her professional field of psychology & also had experienced a personal psychological tragedy when her father committed suicide by jumping off a bridge. Regardless of her level of experience & despite her breadth of knowledge, my friend confesses to absolutely "missing the signs" that something was gravely wrong in the post-partum psyche of a first-time mom. This beautiful young mom took her own life. With a very heavy heart, my friend acknowledged to me a sense of responsibility in this tragic situation. In hindsight, my friend has identified the warning signs that sadly went unaddressed by her, by a loving husband, by a devoted grandma, & by others.

Amy Ruff's Take-Away Wisdom from This Vignette:

Application of our psych material can get very real—very fast! Someone who is "in your circle" may be facing a challenge of the psyche (soul). Intro Psych will help you to notice, care about, & hopefully help if an in-crisis soul crosses your path in life. It's time to ditch the stigma attached to mental illness by replacing misinformed beliefs & irrational fears with knowledge & understanding that's coated in compassion.

Take the Intro Psych challenge—asking hard questions & seeking informed answers.

Bio: Amy Ruff lives with her husband Brian next to her beloved alma mater, Duke University. When not spending time with her six precious grandchildren, Amy enjoys teaching, tutoring, & test prepping students in person as well as online in her areas of specialty: SAT, ACT, & APs (AP Eng Lang & Lit, AP Hx, AP Psych); literary analysis; research & composition; Spanish; psychology; philosophy & religion; executive-function/study skills.

Having completed her BA at Duke University with double majors in English & religion, Amy also earned a Certificate in Duke's rigorous interdisciplinary Women's Studies Program. While an undergraduate & after graduation, Amy worked in editing for the Duke University Press & continues to freelance edit.

Intuitive and seasoned at identifying & developing the potential in her students, Amy's energetic & engaging style enables students to grow in their knowledge of subject matter while also honing their critical-thinking skills & elevating their character. Having homeschooled her own children through high school, Amy continues to support the homeschooling community by offering group-class tutorials.

Counseling students to align self-understanding with their envisioned future, Amy has aided many to make wise choices for their post-high-school paths. She has assisted students to succeed on test prep & applications for acceptance into a range of schools. From Harvard, Duke, & Stanford to UNC & NCSU to community colleges across NC, Amy's students thrive in diverse academic, artistic, athletic, trade, & professional pursuits.

Of Argentine-Italian descent & hailing from Italian roots in Pittsburgh, PA, Amy attended boarding prep school on a full scholarship & received a college scholarship from the Spanis

h National Honor Society. Amy continued her Spanish studies at Duke & served on short-term missions as a Spanish interpreter. From the rudiments of grammar & vocabulary to encounters with cooking & dancing, Sra. Amy's students learn to love Latina language & culture!

Always eager to serve her community, Amy is a supporter of The Honor Foundation (helping special-ops retirees, like Amy's deceased big brother who was a decorated Navy SEAL), volunteer with local nonprofits, board VP for Feather in a Cap drama troupe, & graduate of REI (Racial Equity Institute) training.

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Directions for Deciding Which Track to Take:

Intro Psych has **2 tracks**. The **AP track** involves work that **focuses on prep for the AP Psych Exam** (taken in **May at a local public or charter school**). Both **Honors & AP** students become **facile with study skills** (like Dartmouth's SQ3R) & with **test-prep skills** (like **shrinking** multiple-choice Qs = MCQs) to **answer confidently**. **AP-track** students write free-response questions (FRQs); **HT** students do **not** write FRQs. Both tracks **will write** some short-answer essays (SAEs). In deciding between **AP & honors** tracks, remember that **almost every college major these days requires Intro Psych**; therefore, **taking the May AP Psych Exam** will likely help the student **gain needed credit for college**—unless majoring in psych in which case the **AP credit** would “**advance place**” the student into a higher-level psych course.

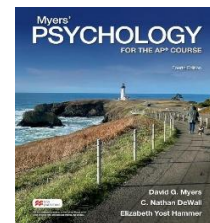
Fine Print on Psych Work:

While Mrs. Ruff details **HT/AP** assignments during the class, the **parent is still in charge of the student's homeschool** class, so **any assignment** on the syllabus **may be omitted, altered, etc.** as the **parent sees fit** or the **student's schedule necessitates**.

Materials:

- For **both honors & AP-track** students, our terrific textbook is ***Psychology for the AP Course, 4th Edition*** by David G. **Myers** (THE authority on the AP Psych Exam).

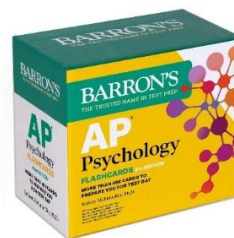
PLEASE WAIT TO ORDER YOUR TEXT B/C MRS. RUFF IS WORKING WITH THE PUBLISHER ON THIS FRONT.



- The psych **publisher** has generated **essential & excellent online resources (Achieve)** that convey **textbook content** through **simulations, diagrams, & short videos**.
- Mrs. Ruff firmly believes** that **print textbooks** are **ideal for developing study skills**, so she is working to provide both the print textbook & **Achieve** online features to each registered student at a reasonable cost: **stay tuned for more details!**

For AP-track Students Only:

- I recommend purchasing **Barron's AP Psych Premium Prep Manual, 2027 (available 7/7/26)**.
- I recommend purchasing **Barron's AP Psychology 6th Edition Flash Cards** (as a kinesthetic study-aid/memorization tool).



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Class Time/Location/Dates:

- Psych is **Tues 845-10 AM 8/25-12/15/26 & 1/5-5/11/27** with breaks **10/13/26 fall, 11/24/26 Thanksgiving, & 3/9/27 spring.**
- Psych is at **Grace Church in room #118:** 200 Sage Rd, Chapel Hill, across from Lowe's near 15-501/I-40.

Registration & Tuition: As follows, the non-refundable **registration** is due by **April** & tuition as **½ in June & ½ in Jan:**

- **\$100 reg/\$900 tuition honors track**
- **\$150 reg/\$1000 tuition AP track**
- **Venmo** www.venmo.com/Amy-Ruff-8
- **Zelle** under 919-219-4338
- **Mail check** 1101 Anderson St 27705

Names: Student's _____ Parents' _____

Address: _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Emails: _____

Phones: Student's _____ Parents' _____

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Introduction to Psychology 845-10 AM <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/900 <input type="checkbox"/> AP \$150/1000 | | |
| American Lit 10-1115 AM <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/850 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/900 <input type="checkbox"/> AP \$150/1000 | | |
| Spanish I Registration/Tuition 1-2 PM Tues at Grace Church <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/800 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/900 | Spanish II Registration/Tuition 1115 AM-1210 PM Tues at Grace Church <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/850 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/950 | Spanish III Registration/Tuition Day/Time TBD <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/900 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/1000 |
| Middle School Composition 1210-1 PM Tues at Grace Church <input type="checkbox"/> One Track Reg/Tuition \$100/1000 | | |
| Introduction to Literature 2-3 PM Tues at Grace Church <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/850 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/900 | | |
| YSA Young Spanish Adventure on Tues at Grace Church 3-345 PM <input type="checkbox"/> One Track Reg/Tuition \$100/800 | | |
| YWA Young Writers Adventure on Tues at Grace Church 345-430 PM <input type="checkbox"/> One Track Reg/Tuition \$100/900 | | |
| <u>Times for Amy's 2026-27 Classes – Hybrid classes are conducted in person & via Zoom (per student preference) *at Grace Church (unless specified otherwise):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Tues/845-10 AM Intro Psych (regular & honors tracks; adv 8th-12th grades) • *Tues/10-1115 AM American Lit (regular, honors, AP tracks; 8th-12th grades) • *Tues/1115 AM-1210 PM Spanish II (regular & honors tracks; 7th-12th grades) • *Tues/1210-1 PM Middle School Composition (one track; 6th-10th grades) • *Tues/1-2 PM Spanish I (regular & honors tracks; 6th-11th grades) • *Tues/2-3 PM Intro Lit (regular & honors; 6th-10th grades) • *Tues/3-345 PM YSA Young Spanish Adventure (ages 7-10) • *Tues/345-430 PM YWA Young Writers Adventure (ages 7-10) • TBD time/place Spanish III (regular & honors tracks; 8th-11th grades) | | <u>Class Calendar 2026-27 Middle/High School:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/25/26 First Fall Tues 2026 Class • 10/13/26 NO Class for Fall Break • 11/24/26 NO Class for Thanksgiving Break • 12/15/26 Last 2026 Tues Class • 1/5/27 First 2027 Tues Class • 3/9/27 NO Class for Spring Break • 5/11/27 Last Class (Comp ends 4/27/27) |
| <u>YWA/YSA 2026-27 Class Calendar:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9/8/26 First Fall Class • 10/13/26 NO Class Fall Break • 11/24/26 NO Class Thanksgiving • 12/1/26 Last Class • 1/12/27 First Class • 3/9/27 NO Class for Spring Break • 4/6/27 Last Class | | |