Psychology Suggested Reading

How do we think? What makes us who we are? Why do we do what we do? The study of Psychology, the science of the mind, explores these questions and many more. The first step to deciding whether Psychology is right for you? Explore the subject and find what about it interests you. Below are some suggestions of where you might want to start but the key to enjoying a discipline and getting the most out of it is to follow your nose and look into what grabs you. Starting with something more general and then asking yourself 'What do I want to know more about?' will help guide you towards reading which you will find interesting.

1. **The Man that mistook his Wife for a Hat** by Oliver Sacks samples the more intriguing neurological disorders, and is a great introduction to the mind more broadly. **The Human Brain** by Susan Greenfield is also a good place to start your exploration of psychology.

2. The **Very Short Introduction** series does a number of psychology topics such as **A Very Short Introduction to Intelligence** by Ian Deary. As the name suggests, these are short, manageable introductions, which are great to start building your understanding or Psychology and its specialisms.

3. The British Psychological Society publishes a monthly magazine called **The Psychologist**, and selected articles are available on the website, http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk/. Make sure you look at the **Research Digest** section for recent developments in the field.

4. **The Psychopath Test,** Jon Ronson. Jon Ronson is a highly entertaining writer and, at times, laugh out loud funny. This book looks at the science behind the concept of Psychopathy and poses some thought-provoking questions.

5. **The Language Instinct** by Stephen Pinker poses the question 'How do we 'know' how to speak?' His answers may surprise you. Pinker has written several popular science books so if you like this one it could be worth looking up **The Blank Slate** or **The Better Angels of our Nature**.

6. **The Maudsley Debates** from the Institute of Psychiatry are available as podcasts here http://www.kcl.ac.uk/iop/news/debates/index.aspx. These are a little more dense than our other suggestions, but worth trying, particularly if you see something that particularly interests you.

7. **Yale** have an open course entitled **Introduction to Psychology.** The link to the list of lectures is below. Pick a couple and expand your knowledge in a new area!
http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology/psyc-110#sessions

8. **The Lucifer Effect: How Good People turn Evil.** Philip Zimbardo, an eminent social psychologist, gives a full account of the details of the controversial Stanford Prison Experiment which investigated the effects of prison on its prisoners and guards. He asks what part institutions have to play in determining an individual's behaviour and actions, relating this to other infamous cases including Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi war criminal, and the abuses at Abu Ghraib prison at the beginning of this century.

9. **Bad Science** by Ben Goldacre isn't strictly a psychology book – Ben Goldacre is a doctor, researcher and science columnist who aims to stop people misinterpreting scientific findings and blindly believing everything they see in the media. One thing that really makes students stand out on personal statements or in interviews is the ability to critique findings and this book is definitely a good place to start.

10. **The NHS "Behind the Headlines"** blog (which has a specific mental health section) gives an introduction to the research behind health-related news stories.
11. There are lots of great **psychology blogs** online. Dorothy Bishop, Professor of Developmental Neuropsychology at Oxford University, writes an excellent one which discusses lots of current issues in psychology, http://deevybee.blogspot.co.uk/.
12. **TED talks -** https://www.ted.com/talks – are great: short, dynamic, and guaranteed to spark your curiosity. Practise using the tools from Bad Science and Behind the Headlines to see if you believe what they say!