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The principal goal of education is to create [people] who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done - [people] who are creative, inventive, and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered.

Jean Piaget

Are we forming children who are only capable of learning what is already known? Or should we try to develop creative and innovative minds, capable of discovery from the preschool age on, throughout life?

-Jean Piaget

**Final project AP Psychology 12**

Wasn’t Piaget an intelligent and insightful thinker? No wonder we’re taking inspiration from him and giving you the opportunity to develop your creative minds; to make discoveries about psychology as well as yourself.

Your final project is an inquiry project where you will explore an aspect of psychology that fascinates you and where you will reflect on how you have changed and grown through your work in psychology. ***Thus, you have two key components: one is your topic exploration and the other is your growth reflection.***

*There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure. ~ Colin Powell*

**Task:** Your topic exploration should be research based and add to our understanding of human behaviour and mental processes. Regurgitation of facts is not our goal, rather you should be applying knowledge and skills you have gained through our coursework to an activity or expanding your knowledge and skillset.

**Presentation:** Your exploration is individually based and will be shared with/presented to your colleagues through a gallery walk on June 20th unless your project involves class participation.

**Grading:** The final project is worth approximately 10-15% of your final grade. There will be no extensions possible as grades are due the following day.

*The unexamined life is not worth living ~ Socrates*

**Reflection:** The essence ofthis is to answer the questions “Who are you?” and “How have you changed/grown as a result of learning and thinking about the concepts and big ideas we have explored together?” and “Where do you go from here?”

This should be in-depth and personal and does not need to be shared in the gallery walk although it can be if you choose. Two pages typed and double spaced is a starting point. If you really want to push your reflection, take a look at the core competency descriptors and see if you can find yourself there – do keep in mind that this is not a specific response to them. The reflection constitutes half of your final project grade.

**What do we mean by a ‘topic exploration?’**

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| *Profile your favourite psychologist*Explain the life, contributions and personal significance of the psychologist who you feel has defined your understanding of psychology, and through that, humanity. | *Lead a whole class discussion* You will research and supply the readings on a psychology topic of interest to youand you will lead a full class discussion for half or all of the block. You will hand in a copy of your discussion questions and plans |
| *Apply psychological theories* (Example: Bandura’s observational learning theory)Examine the children’s programming of a particular cultural time and place and then explain the impacts this may have on children’s understanding of the world. | *Teach a class*Research and prepare a lesson on a topic that we either have not covered OR we have not covered as deeply as you would like. This can be a half or whole block. You will also hand in your lesson plan. |
| *Document the process of cognition*(Example: learn a new skill and record/describe the cognitive processes involved)Select a skill that is currently NOT in your skillset and have someone proficient in that skill teach you. Document the process and write a report that explains the cognitive processes involved in acquiring that skill. Learn to bake a cheesecake and share the result with the class. | *Feeling Grimm? Rewrite a fairytale*Select a classic (non-Disney) fairytale and provide an analysis of the characters. Does the behaviour you see allow you to provide a diagnosis of any of the characters? Provide a detailed diagnosis and an appropriate treatment plan (intervention) for the characters and rewrite the story with a new ending. Also provide an analysis of the story by identifying psychological concepts at work in the story. |
| *Let’s go to the movies – film analysis*Watch a psychology themed film and assess its impact on popular understandings of psychology and the disorder/behaviour and mental processes depicted in the film. Provide a detailed explanation of the disorder/behaviours as known through appropriate research and compare/contrast this to what is shown in the film. Discuss the significance of the film and its impact. A synopsis of the film will also be submitted. Examples of psychology themed films include Inside Out, A Beautiful Mind, Rain Man, Awakenings, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Sybil, the Vow, Memento, Girl Interrupted, etc. | *Get to know your elders*Complete an in-depth personal interview with two to four people you know well who are of different ages (and who are at least 35 years old but the older the better). You will develop a thorough understanding of Erik Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development and apply that understanding to your in-depth knowledge of your interviewees’ life histories. Your informed consent letter as well as interview notes will also be submitted. |

Before embarking on any of these options, or one of your own design, you should check with Ms. Vaessen to make sure your exploration will meet criteria.