INTRODUCTION

The Psychology of Studying

Well Hello There!

You’re actually reading this! As your authors, we’re impressed. Too often, students just jump in and read a textbook from the first assigned chapter to the last. That’s a shame because a textbook needs to be studied, not just read. Think about it: How much do you typically remember after you’ve read straight through a whole textbook chapter? If the answer is “Nada,” “Zilch,” or simply “Not enough,” it may be because reading a chapter is not really the same as studying it. Even if you’re an excellent student, you may be able to improve your study skills. Students who get good grades tend to work smarter, not just longer or harder (Santrock & Halonen, 2007). To help you get a good start, let’s look at several ways to improve studying.
The SQ4R Method—How to Tame a Textbook

What’s the difference between reading a textbook and studying it? You have probably occasionally spent an evening just vegging out in front of a TV set. According to psychologist Donald Norman (1993), you were engaging in experiential cognition. This type of thinking occurs when you passively let an experience happen to you. There is nothing wrong with merely experiencing entertainment. But have you noticed that the next morning you often have trouble remembering what you watched the night before?

In contrast, suppose one of the programs was about, say, global warming, and it really got you thinking. The next morning, you may forget most of what you just experienced something, you also actively think about what you experienced. The next morning, you may forget most of what you watched the night before, but the odds are you will remember the program on global warming. Thus, studying a textbook ideally involves not just experiencing it, but also actively reflecting on what you read.

One way to be more reflective while reading a textbook is to use the SQ4R method. SQ4R stands for survey, question, read, recite, reflect, and review. These six steps can help you learn as you read and reflect, remember more, and review effectively:

S = Survey. Skim through a chapter before you begin reading it. Start by looking at topic headings, figure captions, and summaries. Try to get an overall picture of what lies ahead. Because this book is organized into short sections, you can survey just one section at a time if you prefer.

Q = Question. As you read, turn each topic heading into one or more questions. For example, when you read the heading “Stages of Sleep” you might ask, “Is there more than one stage of sleep?” “What are the stages of sleep?” “How do they differ?” Asking questions helps you read with a purpose.

R1 = Read. The first R in SQ4R stands for read. As you read, look for answers to the questions you asked. Read in short “bites,” from one topic heading to the next, then stop. For difficult material you may want to read only a paragraph or two at a time.

R2 = Recite. After reading a small amount, you should pause and recite or rehearse. Try to mentally answer your questions. Better yet, summarize what you just read in brief notes. Making notes will show you what you know and don’t know, so you can fill gaps in your knowledge (Peverly et al., 2003).

If you can’t summarize the main ideas, skim over each section again. Until you can remember what you just read, there’s little point to reading more. After you’ve studied a short “bite” of text, turn the next topic heading into questions. Then read to the following heading. Remember to look for answers as you read and to recite or take notes before moving on. Ask yourself repeatedly, “What is the main idea here?”

Repeat the question–read–recite cycle until you’ve finished an entire chapter (or just from one Knowledge Builder to the next, if you want to read shorter units).

R3 = Reflect. As you read, try to reflect on what you are reading. One powerful way to do this is to relate new facts, terms, and concepts to information you already know well or to your own experiences. You’ve probably noticed that it is especially easy to remember ideas that are personally meaningful, so try to relate the ideas you encountered to your own life. This may be the most important step in the SQ4R method. The more genuine interest you can bring to your reading, the more you will learn (Hartlep & Forsyth, 2000).

R4 = Review. When you’re done reading, skim back over a section or the entire chapter, or read your notes. Then check your memory by reciting and quizzing yourself again. Try to make frequent, active review a standard part of your study habits (Figure I.1).

The SQ4R method promotes active learning and information processing. You should begin with a survey of the chapter or section, depending on how much you plan to read. Then you should proceed through cycles of questioning, reading, reciting, and reflecting, and conclude with a review of the section or the entire chapter.
Does this really work? Yes. Using a reflective reading strategy improves learning and course grades (Taraban, Rynearson, & Kerr, 2000). Simply reading straight through a chapter can give you “intellectual indigestion.” That’s why it’s better to stop often to think, question, recite, reflect, review, and “digest” information as you read.

**How to Use Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior**

You can apply the SQ4R method to any text. However, we have specifically designed this textbook to help you actively learn psychology.

**Survey**

Each chapter opens with a chapter survey that includes a Gateway Theme and a list of Gateway Questions as well as a Preview of what will be covered. You can use these features to identify important ideas as you begin reading. The Preview should help you get interested in the topics you will be reading about. The Gateway Theme and Gateway Questions are a good guide to the kinds of information to look for as you read. In fact, answers to the Gateway Questions are a good summary of the core concepts in each chapter. If, years from now, you still remember those Gateway concepts, your authors will be very happy indeed. Anyway, after you’ve studied the Gateway Questions, take a few minutes to do your own survey of the chapter. You should notice that each major chapter heading is accompanied by one of the Gateway Questions. This will help you build a “mental map” of upcoming topics.

**Question**

How can I use the SQ4R method to make reading more interesting and effective? One of the key steps is to ask yourself a lot of questions while you read. Dialogue Questions like the one that began this paragraph will help you focus on seeking information as you read. These questions are very much like those running through the minds of students like you as they read this book. Try to anticipate these questions. Even better, be sure to ask your own questions. Try to actively interact with your textbooks as you read.

**Read**

As an aid to reading, important terms are printed in **boldface type** and defined where they first appear. (Some are followed by pronunciaciones—capital letters show which syllables are accented.) You’ll also find a **running glossary** in the lower right-hand corner of pages you are reading, so you never have to guess about the meaning of technical terms. If you want to look up a term from a lecture or another chapter, check the main **Glossary**. This “mini-dictionary” is located near the end of the book. Perhaps you should take a moment to find it now. In addition, many figures and tables help you quickly grasp important concepts.

**Recite and Reflect**

To help you study in smaller “bites,” this book is divided into short sections that end with Knowledge Builders, which make good stopping points. **Knowledge Builders** provide opportunities to check your memory for what you just read. They also invite you to think more deeply by presenting critical thinking questions and questions designed to help you relate material to your own life. (Don’t forget to also take notes or recite and reflect on your own.)

This book also provides other opportunities for you to reflect more deeply about what you are reading. Each chapter ends with a Psychology in Action section. These discussions are filled with practical ideas you can relate to your own life. In many chapters, Discovering Psychology boxes also invite you to relate psychology to your own behavior. Critical Thinking boxes present intriguing questions you can use to sharpen your critical thinking skills. In addition, Human Diversity boxes encourage you to reflect on the rich variety of human experience; Brainwaves boxes show how the brain relates to psychology; and in The Clinical File boxes we will see how psychology can be applied to treat clinical problems.

**Review**

Each chapter concludes with a detailed review. There you will find a list of Gateways to psychology. These are summaries of psychology’s “big ideas” and enduring principles. The first time you finish a chapter, don’t feel obligated to memorize the Gateways concepts. However, be sure to take a moment to think about each statement. Ultimately, the Gateways will provide a good high-level summary of what you learned in this course. By making these ideas your own, you will gain something of lasting value: You will learn to see human behavior as psychologists do. Following each Gateways concept, you will find a more detailed, point-by-point summary of ideas presented in the chapter. These points will help you identify important ideas to remember.

For further review, you can use the running glossary in the margin, as well as boldface terms, figures, and tables. Table I.1 summarizes how this text helps you apply the SQ4R method. Even with all this help, there is still much more you can do on your own.

*Effective Note-Taking—Good Students, Take Note!*  

Reading strategies may be good for studying, but what about taking notes in class? Sometimes it’s hard to know what’s important. Just as studying a textbook is best done reflectively, so too is attending class (Norman, 1993). Like effective reading, good notes come from actively seeking information. People who are **active listeners** avoid distractions and skillfully gather ideas. Here’s a listening/note-taking...
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A plan that works for many students. The letters LISAN, pronounced like the word listen, will help you remember the steps:

L = Lead. Don’t follow. Read assigned materials before coming to class. Try to anticipate what your teacher will say by asking yourself questions. If your teacher provides course notes or PowerPoint overheads before lectures, review them before coming to class. Reflexive questions can come from those materials or from study guides, reading assignments, or your own curiosity.

I = Ideas. Every lecture is based on a core of ideas. Usually, an idea is followed by examples or explanations. Ask yourself often, “What is the main idea now? What ideas support it?”

S = Signal words. Listen for words that tell you what direction the instructor is taking. For instance, here are some signal words:

- There are three reasons why . . .
- Most important is . . .
- On the contrary . . .
- As an example . . .
- Therefore . . .

A = Actively listen. Sit where you can get involved and ask questions. Bring questions you want answered from the last lecture or from your text. Raise your hand at the beginning of class or approach your professor before the lecture. Do anything that helps you stay active, alert, and engaged.

N = Note taking. Students who take accurate lecture notes tend to do well on tests (Williams & Eggert, 2002). However, don’t try to be a tape recorder. Listen to everything, but be selective and write down only key points. If you are too busy writing, you may not grasp what your professor is saying. When you’re taking notes, it might help to think of yourself as a reporter who is trying to get a good story (Ryan, 2001).

Actually, most students take reasonably good notes—and then don’t use them! Many students wait until just before exams to review. By then, their notes have lost much of their meaning. If you don’t want your notes to seem like “chicken scratches,” it pays to review them every day (Rowe, 2007).

Using and Reviewing Your Notes

When you review, you will learn more if you take the extra steps listed here (Knaus & Ellis, 2002; Rowe, 2007; Santrock & Halonen, 2007):

- As soon as you can, reflect on and improve your notes by filling in gaps, completing thoughts, and looking for connections among ideas.
- Remember to link new ideas to what you already know.
- Summarize your notes. Boil them down and organize them.
- After each class session, write down at least seven major ideas, definitions, or details that are likely to become test questions. Then make up questions from your notes and be sure you can answer them.

Summary

The letters LISAN are a guide to active listening, but listening and good note taking are not enough. You must also review, organize, reflect, extend, and think about new ideas. Use active listening to get involved in your classes and you will undoubtedly learn more (Rowe, 2007).

Study Strategies—Making a Habit of Success

Grades depend as much on effort as they do on “intelligence.” However, don’t forget that good students work more efficiently, not just harder. Many study practices are notoriously poor, such as recopying lecture notes, studying class notes but not the textbook (or the textbook but not class notes), outlining chapters, answering study questions with the book open, and “group study” (which often becomes a party). The best students emphasize quality: They study their books and notes in depth and attend classes regularly. It’s a mistake to blame poor grades on events “beyond your control.” Students who are motivated to succeed usually get better grades (Perry et al., 2001). Let’s consider a few more things you can do to improve your study habits.
Study in a Specific Place
Ideally, you should study in a quiet, well-lit area free of distractions. If possible, you should also have at least one place where you only study. Do nothing else at that spot: Keep magazines, MP3 players, friends, cell phones, pets, posters, video games, puzzles, food, lovers, sports cars, elephants, pianos, televisions, YouTube, kazoos, and other distractions out of the area. In this way, the habit of studying will become strongly linked with one specific place. Then, rather than trying to force yourself to study, all you have to do is go to your study area. Once there, you’ll find it is relatively easy to get started.

Use Spaced Study Sessions
It is reasonable to review intensely before an exam. However, you’re taking a big risk if you are only “cramming” (learning new information at the last minute). Spaced practice is much more efficient (Anderson, 2005). Spaced practice consists of a large number of relatively short study sessions. Long, uninterrupted study sessions are called massed practice. (If you “massed up” your studying, you probably messed it up too.)

Cramming places a big burden on memory. Usually, you shouldn’t try to learn anything new about a subject during the last day before a test. It is far better to learn small amounts every day and review frequently (Anderson, 2005).

Try Mnemonics
Learning has to start somewhere, and memorizing is often the first step. Many of the best ways to improve memory are covered in Chapter 8. Let’s consider just one technique here.

A mnemonic (nee-MON-ik) is a memory aid. There are many ways to create mnemonics. Most mnemonics link new information to ideas or images that are easy to remember. For example, what if you want to remember that the Spanish word for duck is pato (pronounced POT-oh)? To use a mnemonic, you could picture a duck in a pot or a duck wearing a pot for a hat. Likewise, to remember that the cerebellum controls coordination, you might picture someone named “Sarah Bellum” who is very coordinated. For best results, make your mnemonic images exaggerated or bizarre, vivid, and interactive (Macklin & McDaniel, 2005).

Test Yourself
A great way to improve grades is to take practice tests before the real one in class. In other words, studying should include self-testing, in which you pose questions to yourself. You can use flash cards, Learning Check questions, online quizzes, a study guide, or other means. As you study, ask many questions and be sure you can answer them. Studying without self-testing is like practicing for a basketball game without shooting any baskets.

For more convenient self-testing, your professor may make a Study Guide or a separate booklet of Practice Quizzes available. You can use either to review for tests. Practice quizzes are also available on the book companion website, as described later. However, don’t use practice quizzes as a substitute for studying your textbook and lecture notes. Trying to learn from quizzes alone will probably lower your grades. It is best to use quizzes to find out what topics you need to study more (Brothen & Wambach, 2001).

Overlearn
Many students underprepare for exams, and most overestimate how well they will do. A solution to both problems is overlearning, in which you continue studying beyond your initial mastery of a topic. In other words, plan to do extra study and review after you think you are prepared for a test. One way to overlearn is approach all tests as if they will be essays. That way, you will learn more completely, so you really “know your stuff.”

Self-Regulated Learning—Academic All-Stars
Think of a topic you are highly interested in, such as music, sports, fashion, cars, cooking, politics, or movies. Whatever the topic, you have probably learned a lot about it—painlessly. How could you make your college work more like voluntary learning? An approach called self-regulated learning might be a good start. Self-regulated learning is deliberately reflective and active, self-guided study (Hofer & Yu, 2003). Here’s how you can change passive studying into goal-oriented learning:

1. Set specific, objective learning goals. Try to begin each learning session with specific goals in mind. What knowledge or skills are you trying to master? What do you hope to accomplish (Knaus & Ellis, 2002)?

Mnemonic
A memory aid or strategy.

Massed practice
Practice done in a long, uninterrupted study session.

Overlearning
Continuing to study and learn after you think you’ve mastered a topic.

Self-regulated learning
Deliberately reflective and active, self-guided study.
2. **Plan a learning strategy.** How will you accomplish your goals? Make daily, weekly, and monthly plans for learning. Then put them into action.

3. **Be your own teacher.** Effective learners silently give themselves guidance and ask themselves questions. For example, as you are learning, you might ask yourself, “What are the important ideas here? What do I remember? What don’t I understand? What do I need to review? What should I do next?”

4. **Monitor your progress.** Self-regulated learning depends on self-monitoring. Exceptional learners keep records of their progress toward learning goals (pages read, hours of studying, assignments completed, and so forth). They quiz themselves, use study guides, make sure they follow the SQ4R system, and find other ways to check their understanding while learning.

5. **Reward yourself.** When you meet your daily, weekly, or monthly goals, reward your efforts in some way, such as going to a movie or downloading some new music. Be aware that self-praise also rewards learning. Being able to say, “Hey, I did it!” or “Good work!” and knowing that you deserve it can be very rewarding. In the long run, success, self-improvement, and personal satisfaction are the real payoffs for learning.

6. **Evaluate your progress and goals.** It is a good idea to frequently evaluate your performance records and goals. Are there specific areas of your work that need improvement? If you are not making good progress toward long-range goals, do you need to revise your short-term targets?

7. **Take corrective action.** If you fall short of your goals you may need to adjust how you budget your time. You may also need to change your learning environment to deal with distractions such as watching TV, daydreaming, talking to friends, or testing the structural integrity of the walls with your stereo system.

If you discover that you lack necessary knowledge or skills, ask for help, take advantage of tutoring programs, or look for information beyond your courses and textbooks. Knowing how to regulate and control learning can be a key to lifelong enrichment and personal empowerment.

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**Procrastination—Avoiding the Last-Minute Blues**

All of these study techniques are fine. But what can I do about procrastination? A tendency to procrastinate is almost universal. (When campus workshops on procrastination are offered, many students never get around to signing up!) Even when procrastination doesn’t lead to failure, it can cause much suffering. Procrastinators work only under pressure, skip classes, give false reasons for late work, and feel ashamed of their last-minute efforts. They also tend to feel frustrated, bored, and guilty more often (Blunt & Pychyl, 2005).

**Why do so many students procrastinate?** Many students equate grades with their personal worth. That is, they act as if grades tell whether they are good, smart people who will succeed in life. By procrastinating they can blame poor work on a late start, rather than a lack of ability (Beck, Koons, & Milgrim, 2000). After all, it wasn’t their best effort, was it?

Perfectionism is a related problem. If you expect the impossible, it’s hard to start an assignment. Students with high standards often end up with all-or-nothing work habits (Onwuegbuzie, 2000).

**Time Management**

Most procrastinators must eventually face the self-worth issue. Nevertheless, most can improve by learning study skills and better time management. We have already discussed general study skills, so let’s consider time management in a little more detail.

A **weekly time schedule** is a written plan that allocates time for study, work, and leisure activities. To prepare your schedule, make a chart showing all the hours in each day of the week. Then fill in times that are already committed: sleep, meals, classes, work, team practices, lessons, appointments, and so forth. Next, fill in times when you will study for various classes. Finally, label the remaining hours as open or free times.

Each day, you can use your schedule as a checklist. That way you’ll know at a glance which tasks are done and which still need attention (Knaus & Ellis, 2002).

You may also find it valuable to make a **term schedule** that lists the dates of all quizzes, tests, reports, papers, and other major assignments for each class.

The beauty of sticking to a schedule is that you know you are making an honest effort. It will also help you avoid feeling bored while you are working or guilty when you play.

Be sure to treat your study times as serious commitments, but respect your free times, too. And remember, students who study hard and practice time management do get better grades (Rau & Durand, 2000).

**Goal Setting**

As mentioned earlier, students who are active learners set **specific goals** for studying. Such goals should be clear-cut and measurable (Knaus & Ellis, 2002). If you find it hard to stay motivated, try setting goals for the semester, the week, the day, and even for single study sessions. Also, be aware that more effort early in a course can greatly reduce the “pain” and stress you will experience later. If your professors don’t give frequent assignments, set your own day-by-day goals. That way, you can turn big assignments into a series of smaller tasks that you can actually complete (Ariely & Wertenbroch, 2002). An example would be reading, studying, and reviewing 8 pages a day to complete a 40-page chapter in 5 days. For this textbook, reading from one Knowledge Builder to the next each day might be a good pace. Remember, many small steps can add up to an impressive achievement.
Make Learning an Adventure

A final point to remember is that you are most likely to procrastinate if you think a task will be unpleasant (Pychyl et al., 2000). Learning can be hard work. Nevertheless, many students find ways to make schoolwork interesting and enjoyable. Try to approach your schoolwork as if it were a game, a sport, an adventure, or simply a way to become a better person. The best educational experiences are challenging yet fun (Ferrari & Scher, 2000).

Virtually every topic is interesting to someone, somewhere. You may not be particularly interested in the sex life of South American tree frogs. However, a biologist might be fascinated. (Another tree frog might be, too.) If you wait for teachers to "make" their courses interesting, you are missing the point. Interest is a matter of your attitude. (See Figure I.2 for a summary of study skills.)

Taking Tests—Are You “Test Wise”?

If I read and study effectively, is there anything else I can do to improve my grades? You must also be able to show what you know on tests. Here are some suggestions for improving your test-taking skills:

General Test-Taking Skills

You'll do better on all types of tests if you observe the following guidelines (Wood & Willoughby, 1995):

1. Read all directions and questions carefully. They may give you good advice or clues.
2. Quickly survey the test before you begin.
3. Answer easy questions before spending time on more difficult ones.

4. Be sure to answer all questions.
5. Use your time wisely.
6. Ask for clarification when necessary.

Objective Tests

Several additional strategies can help you do better on objective tests. Objective tests (multiple-choice and true–false items) require you to recognize a correct answer among wrong ones or a true statement versus a false one. Here are some strategies for taking objective tests:

1. First, relate the question to what you know about the topic. Then, read the alternatives. Does one match the answer you expected to find? If none match, reexamine the choices and look for a partial match.
2. Read all the choices for each question before you make a decision. Here's why: If you immediately think that a is correct and stop reading, you might miss seeing a better answer like "both a and d."
3. Read rapidly and skip items you are unsure about. You may find "free information" in later questions that will help you answer difficult items.
4. Eliminate certain alternatives. With a four-choice multiple-choice test, you have one chance in four of guessing right. If you can eliminate two alternatives, your guessing odds improve to 50-50.
5. Unless there is a penalty for guessing, be sure to answer any skipped items. Even if you are not sure of the answer, you may be right. If you leave a question blank, it is automatically wrong. When you are forced to guess, don't choose the longest answer or the letter you’ve used the least. Both strategies lower scores more than random guessing does.
6. There is a bit of folk wisdom that says “Don’t change your answers on a multiple-choice test. Your first choice is usually right.” This is false. If you change answers, you are more likely to gain points than to lose them. This is especially true if you are uncertain of your first choice or it was a hunch, and if your second choice is more reflective (Higham & Gerrard, 2005).
7. Remember, you are searching for the one best answer to each question. Some answers may be partly true, yet flawed in some way. If you are uncertain, try rating each multiple-choice alternative on a 1–10 scale. The answer with the highest rating is the one you are looking for.
8. Few circumstances are always or never present. Answers that include superlatives such as most, least, best, worst, largest, or smallest are often false.

Weekly time schedule A written plan that allocates time for study, work, and leisure activities during a 1-week period.

Term schedule A written plan that lists the dates of all major assignments for each of your classes for an entire semester or quarter.

Specific goal A goal with a clearly defined and measurable outcome.
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Essay Tests

Essay questions are a weak spot for students who lack organization, don’t support their ideas, or don’t directly answer the question (Rowe, 2007). When you take an essay exam try the following:

1. Read the question carefully. Be sure to note key words, such as compare, contrast, discuss, evaluate, analyze, and describe. These words all demand a certain emphasis in your answer.
2. Answer the question. If the question asks for a definition and an example, make sure you provide both. Providing just a definition or just an example will get you half marks. Giving three examples instead of the one asked for will not earn you any extra marks.
3. Think about your answer for a few minutes and list the main points you want to make. Just write them as they come to mind. Then rearrange the ideas in a logical order and begin writing. Elaborate plans or outlines are not necessary.
4. Don’t beat around the bush or pad your answer. Be direct. Make a point and support it. Get your list of ideas into words.
5. Look over your essay for errors in spelling and grammar. Save this for last. Your ideas are of first importance. You can work on spelling and grammar separately if they affect your grades.

Short-Answer Tests

Tests that ask you to fill in a blank, define a term, or list specific items can be difficult. Usually, the questions themselves contain little information. If you don’t know the answer, you won’t get much help from the questions.

The best way to prepare for short-answer tests is to overlearn the details of the course. As you study, pay special attention to lists of related terms.

Again, it is best to start with the questions you’re sure you know. Follow that by completing items you think you probably know. Questions you have no idea about can be left blank.

Again, for your convenience, Figure I.2 provides a checklist summary of the main study skills we have covered.

Using Digital Media—Netting New Knowledge

Google any psychological term ranging from amnesia to zoophobia and you will find a vast library of information, from serious websites, like that maintained by the American Psychological Association, to Wikipedia entries and personal blogs. Even if you don’t own a computer, you can usually use one on campus to learn more about psychology. However, be aware that information on the Internet is not always accurate. It is wise to approach all websites with a healthy dose of skepticism.

Digital Gateways

The Internet is a network of interlinked computers. An important subpart of the Internet is the World Wide Web (WWW) or just plain “web,” an interlinked system of information “sites” or “pages.” If you know the URL (or “address”) of a website, you can view the information it contains. Almost all web pages also have links to other websites. These links let you “jump” from one site to the next to find more information.

Google It

To find psychological information on the Internet, you’ll need a computer and an Internet connection. If you don’t own a computer, you can usually use one on campus. Various software browsers make it easier to navigate around the web. A browser allows you to see text, images, sounds, and video clips stored on other computers. Browsers also keep lists of your favorite URLs so that you can return to them.

The Book Companion Website

How would I find information about psychology on the Internet? Your first stop on the Internet should be the book companion website. Here’s what you’ll find there:

- **Online Quizzes.** You can use these chapter-by-chapter multiple-choice and true–false quizzes to practice for tests and check your understanding.
- **Web Links.** This area is a “launching pad” that will take you to other psychology-related sites on the Internet. If a site sounds interesting, a click of the mouse will take you to it.
- **Online Flash Cards.** These online flash cards allow you to practice terms and concepts interactively.
- **Crossword Puzzles.** Crosswords are a fun way to check your knowledge of key terms and their definitions.

The book companion website is located at [www.cengage.com/psychology/coon](http://www.cengage.com/psychology/coon). Be sure to visit this site for valuable information about how to improve your grades and enhance your appreciation of psychology.
CengageNOW

Students can also make use of CengageNOW for Coon/Mitterer's Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior, twelfth edition, a web-based, personalized study system that provides a pre-test and a post-test for each chapter. CengageNOW, located at academic.cengage.com/login, also creates personalized study plans—which include rich media such as videos, animations, and learning modules and links to the eBook that help you study the specific topics in the text where you need to study most (Figure I.3).

Wadsworth’s Psychology Resource Center

Do you like videos, simulations, and animations? Do you learn best when you get actively involved in psychology? The Wadsworth Psychology Resource Center brings psychology to life with a full library of original and classic video clips plus interactive learning modules tied to all of the topics covered in your introductory psychology course. Log in at www.cengage.com/login to visit the resource center.

Psychology Websites

You’ll find the titles of interesting websites you may want to explore at the end of each chapter in this book, including this one. The best way to reach these sites is through the book companion website. We have not included website addresses in the book because they often change or may become inactive. At the website you’ll find up-to-date links for websites listed in this book. The sites we’ve listed are generally of high quality. However, be aware that information on the Internet is not always accurate. It is wise to approach all websites with a healthy dose of skepticism.

PsycINFO

Psychological knowledge can also be found through specialized online databases. One of the best is PsycINFO, offered by the American Psychological Association. PsycINFO provides summaries of the scientific and scholarly literature in psychology. Each record in PsycINFO consists of an abstract (short summary), plus notes about the author, title, source, and other details (Figure I.4). All entries are indexed using key terms. Thus, you can search for various topics by entering words such as drug abuse, postpartum depression, or creativity.

You can gain access to PsycINFO in several ways. Almost every college and university subscribes to PsycINFO. If this is the case, you can usually search PsycINFO from a terminal in your college library or computer center for free. PsycINFO can also be directly accessed (for a fee) through the Internet via APA’s PsycINFO Direct service. For more information on how to gain access to PsycINFO, check this website: www.apa.org/psycinfo.

The APA Website

The APA also maintains an online library of general interest articles on aging, anger, children and families, depression, divorce, emotional health, kids and the media, sexuality, stress, testing issues, women and men, and other topics. They are well worth consulting when you have questions about psychological issues. You’ll find them at www.apa.org. For links to recent articles in newspapers and magazines, be sure to check the APA’s PsycPORT page at www.psycport.com.

Internet An electronic network of interlinked computers.
World Wide Web (WWW) A system of information sites accessible through the Internet.
Links Connections built into websites that let you "jump" from one site to the next.
Browser Software that facilitates access to text, images, sounds, video, and other information stored in formats used on the Internet.
PsycINFO A searchable, online database that provides brief summaries of the scientific and scholarly literature in psychology.
INTRODUCTION

Please do take some of the “digital gateways” described here. You might be surprised by the fascinating information that awaits you. Investigating psychology on your own is one of the best ways to enrich an already valuable course.

A Final Word

There is a distinction in Zen between “live words” and “dead words.” Live words come from personal experience; dead words are “about” a subject. This book can only be a collection of dead words unless you accept the challenge of taking an intellectual step through this gateway to psychology. You will find many helpful, useful, and exciting ideas in the pages that follow. To make them yours, you must set out to actively learn as much as you can. The ideas presented here should get you off to a good start. Good luck!

For more information, consult any of the following books:


KNOWLEDGE BUILDER

Study Skills

RECITE
1. The four Rs in SQ4R stand for “read, recite, reflect, and review.” T or F?
2. When using the LISAN method, students try to write down as much of a lecture as possible so that their notes are complete. T or F?
3. Spaced study sessions are usually superior to massed practice. T or F?
4. According to research, you should almost always stick with your first answer on multiple-choice tests. T or F?
5. To use the technique known as overlearning, you should continue to study after you feel you have begun to master a topic. T or F?
6. Setting learning goals and monitoring your progress are important parts of self-regulated learning.
7. Procrastination is related to seeking perfection and equating self-worth with grades. T or F?

REFLECT

Critical Thinking
8. How are the SQ4R method and the LISAN method related?

Relate

Which study skills do you think would help you the most? Which techniques do you already use? Which do you think you should try? To what extent do you already engage in self-regulated learning? What additional steps could you take to become a more active, goal-oriented learner?

Web Resources

For an up-to-date list of direct links to interesting sites, including those listed here, visit the student companion site for this book at www.cengage.com/psychology/coon.

How to Succeed as a Student Advice on how to be a college student. Topics from studying to housing to preparation for work are included.

Library Research in Psychology Hints on how to do library research in psychology.

Psychology Glossary You can use this glossary to get additional definitions for common psychological terms.

Study Skills More information on SQ4R, taking tests, note taking, and time management.

Interactive Learning

Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior Book Companion Website www.cengage.com/psychology/coon

Visit your book companion website, where you will find flash cards, practice quizzes, web links, and more to help you study.

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