

# Unit 1: Psychology and Human Behavior

Content Area: **Social Studies**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Semester 1**  
Length: **~4 Weeks / ~12 Class Meetings**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Introduction

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Students will begin the course by examining the question of human nature through analysis of philosophical, religious and scientific theories as well as the analysis of students' own beliefs. Historical and current events will focus student attention on the degree of hatred and violence in the world community, as well as the potential for human good. Students will be introduced to the thematic vocabulary and questions that will overshadow the rest of the year.

## Standards

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LA.RH.11-12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to develop an understanding of the text as a whole.
LA.RH.11-12.2	Determine the theme, central ideas, information and/or perspective(s) presented in a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events, ideas and/or author's perspective(s) develop over the course of the text.
LA.RH.11-12.3	Evaluate various perspectives for actions or events; determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RH.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
LA.RH.11-12.8	Evaluate an author's claims, reasoning, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other sources.
LA.RH.11-12.9	Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
LA.RST.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
LA.RST.11-12.9	Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.
LA.WHST.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.WHST.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
SOC.6.2.12	World History/Global Studies: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically and systematically about how past interactions of people, cultures, and the environment affect issues across time and cultures. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions as socially and ethically responsible.
SOC.6.2.12.A.6.c	Analyze why terrorist movements have proliferated, and evaluate their impact on governments, individuals, and societies.

SOC.6.2.12.A.6.d	Assess the effectiveness of responses by governments and international organizations to tensions resulting from ethnic, territorial, religious, and/or nationalist differences.
SOC.6.2.12.C.6.a	Evaluate efforts of governmental, nongovernmental, and international organizations to address economic imbalances and social inequalities.
SOC.6.2.12.D.3.d	Analyze the extent to which racism was both a cause and consequence of imperialism, and evaluate the impact of imperialism from multiple perspectives.
SOC.6.2.12.D.3.e	Analyze the impact of the policies of different European colonizers on indigenous societies, and explain the responses of these societies to imperialistic rule.
SOC.6.2.12.D.4.i	Compare and contrast the actions of individuals as perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers during events of persecution or genocide, and describe the long-term consequences of genocide for all involved.
SOC.9-12.4.1	Students will identify common patterns of social inequality.
SOC.9-12.4.1.1	Privilege
SOC.9-12.4.1.2	Power
SOC.9-12.4.1.3	Racial and ethnic inequality
SOC.9-12.4.2	Students will analyze the effects of social inequality on groups and individuals.
SOC.9-12.4.2.1	Life chances
SOC.9-12.4.2.2	Social problems
SOC.9-12.4.2.3	Inter- and intra-group conflict
SOC.9-12.4.3	Students will explain the relationship between social institutions and inequality.
SOC.9-12.4.3.1	Distribution of power through social institutions
SOC.9-12.4.3.2	Potential of institutions to produce, reinforce, or challenge inequality
SOC.9-12.4.4	Students will assess responses to social inequality.
SOC.9-12.4.4.1	Individual responses to inequality
SOC.9-12.4.4.2	Group responses to inequality such as social movements
SOC.9-12.4.4.3	Social policy responses to inequality

## Essential Questions

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- How do the philosophies of **Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau** attempt to explain human nature?
- Are humans more influenced by **nature or nurture**?
- Are aggression and cruelty intrinsic in human beings?
- How does **prejudice** and **bias** affect individual behavior?
- What are the moral implications of **obedience** to authority?
- How do we explain **bystander apathy**?
- What are the **moral responsibilities** of human beings?
- Why is **conformity** an inherent part of human existence?
- What are the dangers of conformity and unquestioned obedience to authority?
- What makes people defy authority?

## Content / Skills

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**Students will be able to understand:**

- *The general theories of human nature and relate these to personal experience.*
- *Aggression and cruelty in relation to human nature.*
- *The positive and negative behaviors associated with acts of courage, integrity, and empathy.*
- *Comparisons and contrasts between the behavior of the perpetrator, victim, collaborator, bystander, resister, and rescuer.*
- *Generalizations that reflect their individual views of human nature.*
- *The importance of biology and environment of human development.*

**Student Tasks:**

- **Students will** *debate the difference between environment and biology in relation to human development.*
- **Students will** *be able to explain the competing theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau regarding human nature.*
- **Students will** *relate general theories of human nature to personal experience.*
- **Students will** *analyze readings to understand the power of conformity and obedience to authority.*
- **Students will** *discuss the effect of bystander apathy in relation to human behavior.*