VCE Psychology at Melbourne Museum

## VCE Psychology: Unit 4 Provocations for The Mind Exhibition

# Information for teachers

Each of the unit-linked resources provides themed provocations for student-led enquiry. They do not represent a comprehensive coverage of all of the material relevant to each unit in the galleries, but a selection of those exhibits most relevant.

The Mind exhibition provides a unique first-person perspective through immersive experiences, artworks, and historical psychiatric objects. Keep in mind that it has been designed for general public audiences, and should not be considered as an exhaustive resource with regards to furthering scientific understanding. The gallery instead provides a launch-pad for exploring the themes outlined, and can be an excellent primary resource for collecting video, photographic or audio data in an affective, thought-provoking environment.

Students can share their research with their classmates or other community members through a variety of self-directed modes, for example:

* Video
* Digital book – eg ibook
* Podcast
* Presentation or lecture
* Article – informative, opinion, interview
* Journal

We recommend familiarising yourself with the trail prior to your class excursion. Visiting the galleries before the excursion will also assist you in directing your students. **VIT registered teachers can get into Melbourne Museum free of charge by subscribing to MV teachers:**

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/mv-teachers-network/>

# Student provocations

The unit-by-unit resources can be used in many ways. Students may wish to choose a topic to investigate that relates to a particular area of interest or is linked to another project. Some teachers prefer to allocate the provocations, either distributing them evenly or creating a whole class focus that may form an assessment task. The provocations can be explored individually or in small groups (2-3 students is ideal).

Each resource provides student explorations within The Mind exhibition that covers content relevant from each unit of VCE Psychology:

Unit 4

**Area of Study 1 – How do levels of consciousness affect mental processes and behaviour?**

* Nature of consciousness

**Area of Study 2 – What influences mental wellbeing?**

* Defining mental health
* Maintenance of mental health

# Psychology Unit 4 – Choose **only** **one** or **two** provocations for deep inquiry:

**Area of Study 1**

1. “There is no coming to consciousness without pain” C.G. Jung – Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. What do you think Jung meant be this quote? How does this view point of consciousness as awareness or enlightenment differ from the scientific definitions of consciousness found in the Mind gallery? How do you think altered states of consciousness fit into Jung’s viewpoint?
   * Start here: the area around the dream couches is a good starting point (blue section)
2. How have inventions such as the EEG changed our understanding of brain function and states of consciousness? Compare this to historical attempts at making sense of the brain. What have we learnt? What have been the impacts of this knowledge? – consider positives and negatives. What physiological responses are recorded by the device?
   * Start here: The EEG is found just before entering the dream couch area (blue section). Historical information is found throughout the gallery, although the light box timeline at the very entrance may be a good starting point.
3. Can our brain-waves be impacted by our sensory inputs? Try interviewing your class mate before and after they have experienced the ‘Dream Couch’. Do they feel different or ‘strange’ - why or why not? What part of the brain could be affected? What other experiences may cause a similar result?
   * Start here: Dream couches (blue section). You will find other areas that relate to changed levels of consciousness, brain waves and how they are measured. What other experiences in the gallery may affect brain waves?

**Area of Study 2**

1. Some of the treatments for mental illness that can be found in the Mind gallery can be quite confronting. Some of these treatments were more about managing patients rather than improving their conditions – how have these two elements changed over time? How has a growing understanding of ethical considerations influenced the treatment of mental health patients?
   * The confinement cupboard (opposite the emotions video screen) is a thought-provoking first step (purple section)
2. Explore the Cunningham-Dax collection in the art-gallery section of the exhibition. What role has art played in the life of these artists? Why do you think art therapy is becoming more widely accepted as part of a broader treatment plan for mental health patients?
   * Start here: the Cunningham-Dax exhibition (blue section)
3. In the Cunningham-Dax art gallery section of the exhibition, choose the work of two or three artists to compare. What does their art convey to you in terms of the artists journey through the mental health continuum (healthy – mental health problems – mental disorder). What do you learn about mental health and disorder by viewing these artworks?
   * Start here: the Cunningham-Dax exhibition (blue section)

