

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an independent research-based project. It counts as half an A-level and can be taken as an enrichment course in Year 12 (exam board OCR). You can choose to base your project on anything; from fashion and beauty to quantum mechanics, any topic is a possible Extended Project. It can be related to your studies, your career aspirations or your hobbies and general interests; the main thing is that it should be a topic that really interests you. After planning and researching your topic, you produce either an extended essay or what is called an artefact. The artefact can be anything; a performance, a piece of creative writing, a piece of art, an experiment, an event, a presentation, a website, a short book, a short film etc., the possibilities are endless.

The EPQ is highly valued by universities as it teaches students project planning, research skills, transferable skills, independence and critical analysis and evaluation. If you are interested in taking the EPQ, you should start thinking about and making notes on possible topics, you should read up on them by searching online for relevant articles, books, podcasts and videos. Keep a record of what you have read or watched and make notes on anything interesting. Think about what interests and skills you might like to develop by completing the project and what sort of artefact you might enjoy completing.

We've included some pictures of past EPQs to give you an idea of the work students have produced.





CASE STUDY:

THE KRAYS

Another major factor for why deviant behaviour occurs is due to the nurture and up-bringing applied to these criminals. An infamous duo that I will be analysing are the twin 'Kray brothers', Ronnie and Reggie Kray, who in their time of fame and glory were thought to be the most ruthless criminal gangsters in East London. I chose to analyse these criminals as I believe that their childhood and environmental influences contributed hugely to their career in criminality, and sculpted the way they thought and acted in adulthood. This applies to the Social Learning Theory, a psychological approach developed by psychologist Bandura. This helps to explain the criminal behaviour displayed by the Krays as it assumes that environmental influences hugely direct their behaviour. This is an important ideology because,

as mentioned before, the Krays upbringing heavily influenced their paths to criminal opulence. A paramount period in the twin brother's lives were when they were evacuated during World War 2, this led to them being away from their mother (their primary care-giver) which leads to another psychological phenomenon called maternal deprivation. This idea, developed by Bowlby, describes being separated from your mother for a prolonged period of time without a substitute caregiver - maternal deprivation - as having emotional and intellectual consequences. This could suggest that the Krays were subjected to these consequences, resulting in emotional changes which could have contributed to their criminal outcome.

Daily Mirror

GUILTY OF MURDER

The Kray twins, Ronnie and Reggie, and the late brother Ronald. Photos by HAROLD BAKER.

The Kray twins will be sentenced today

The Kray twins, Ronnie and Reggie, and the late brother Ronald, were sentenced today to life imprisonment for the murder of a woman.

The Kray twins also had a younger sister who died at birth, this event so early in their lives could have contributed to their lack of emotion in adulthood. Their time spent in education was also a time of relevance, from being in fights at school to knocking police around as children; this may have been the starting point for the brothers rebelling against the law enforcement in the future. Ahead of time, the brothers also had a talent for boxing as young men, this could have classically conditioned their aggressive behaviour which was positively reinforced (operant conditioning) with power and reward. This behaviour is then learned which could have contributed to their aggressive behaviour during their career in criminality. The Krays were so notorious that they were locked away in the Tower of London before established their gang which they called the Firm, and bought a run-down snooker club, set up several protection rackets. Robberies, hijacking and fire-bombing were all part of their criminal acts. By the 1960's they owned several nightclubs, achieved flash-bulb status, and were friends with power players, politicians, and Hollywood's biggest stars. Their reign of deviant achievement was put at a halt when Ronnie Kray (the older brother) showed increased signs of aggression and paranoia, he was later diagnosed as a schizophrenic, this could have also contributed to some of his criminal acts, as hallucinations and delusions of persecution (feeling threatened by others) are symptoms of this disorder which could have influenced his deviancy.