Unit 3

*How Do We Make Sense of the World?*



What’s up, yo? My name is . I’m cool.

LET’S PLAY FAMILY FEUD!

*Answer the following questions. We won’t survey 100 people, but the top two or three answers will be on the board.*

1. Which statement do you agree most with?
	1. All people are good; sometimes, they make poor decisions.
	2. People are mostly good; some people, however, are bad.
	3. All people are born bad; those who choose to be good, do so at their own will.
	4. Some people are born bad; some people are born good.
	5. Everyone is born with a clean slate. What you choose to do determines whether you are good or bad.
2. Which statement do you agree most with?
	1. People, as a whole, are hardworking.
	2. People, as a whole, are lazy.
	3. Some people are hardworking, and some people are lazy. It depends on your personality.
	4. Everyone is born with a clean slate. What you are to do depends on what you choose to do.
3. Which statement do you agree with most?
	1. All people are fair.
	2. All people are unfair.
	3. People choose whether or not to be fair or unfair.
	4. People are mostly fair, but there are some people who are naturally unfair.
	5. All people are fair, except for teachers when it comes time for marking.
4. Which statement do you agree with most?
	1. People are cooperative naturally.
	2. People only cooperate when it suits them.
	3. People are altruistic (self-centred).
	4. Some people are cooperative, while others are altruistic.
	5. I am the only cooperative person to roam the earth.

How Do We Make Sense of Our World?

*We make sense of the world around us primarily through three processes: social cognition, social perception, and self-concept (identity).*

**Social** **Cognition** helps us make sense of. It is the way in which our thoughts are affected by the immediate social situation. (See your notes from 2.4 on schema, stereotypes, etc.)

**Social Perception** is how we. It’s how we guess others’ motives and intentions from observing their behaviour. It helps us to decide the causes of the behaviours (internal causes or situational causes).

**Self-Concept** (Identity) is how we. It is shaped by self-actualizing tendencies, others’ behaviours, and others’ evaluations.

# Put These to Use: Task One

1. *On a sheet of loose leaf, write about a social situation that was very difficult for you. You may have felt confused, isolated, or helpless. Be very detailed. Only record the facts (not emotions, feelings, etc.).*
2. *Go back to that story. On a separate sheet of paper, write out how you felt about the situation. Were you upset? How do you think others felt? Be very detailed.*
3. *On a separate sheet of paper, explain why the story came to be. What caused the episode? What happened after the episode?*
4. *Review each sheet of paper. Underline the statements that are based on social cognition. Circle the statements that are based on social perception. Highlight the statements that are based on self-concept.*

*Be very detailed when explaining your episode. You should have a complete paragraph (at minimum) for each of the three tasks.*

SCHEMAS

**A schema is .**

**Types of Schemas**

**Cognitive maps** - mental representations of familiar parts of one’s world

*Draw a map from your house to school. Be as detailed as possible. This is a representation of the cognitive map you have.*

**images** – what we picture in our mind when we think of an object.

*Draw the image that comes to mind when you think of a vase.*

**concept schema** - categories of objects, events, or ideas with common properties

*Create a list of items that fall into the schema “school supplies.”*

**event scripts** - schemas about familiar sequences of events or activities

*Describe what you expect to happen at the till at a grocery store.*

**mental models** - clusters of relationships between objects or processes

*Explain how to make a simple smoothie using a blender. The blender is the object, and the blending of the smoothie is the process. Be very detailed.*

**Autobiographical Memory**:

* memories of our past , and .
* these memories define us
	+ we learn about ourselves through and observations of our own behaviour
* we also define our memories  when:
	+ we access from memory our current behaviour or attitude
	+ we consider whether our present state is similar to, or different from our past one

**Task Two: Timeline**

Create a timeline that highlights major events in your life (both good and bad) that have shaped who you are today. Aim to have at least seven events. Slope the line up if it was good and down if it wasn’t so good. Your timeline should look like a heart rate monitor sort of.

Interpreting Social Schemas

1. **R**
	* If you are happy, you will have a positive interpretation.
	* If you are unhappy, you will have a negative interpretation.
2. **D (with the other person/people)**
	* If you have or want a relationship, you will have a positive interpretation.
	* If you don’t know/don’t care to know about the person or relationship, you will have a negative interpretation.
3. **P**
	* What meaning have similar events held?
4. **A**
	* Beliefs shape the way we interpret another person’s actions.
5. **E**
	* Anticipation shapes our interpretation
		+ Self-fulfilling prophecies – when an expectation makes an outcome more likely to occur
			1. Self-Imposed Prophecies
				- Your expectations influence your behaviour.
			2. Imposing Your Expectations
				- You impose your expectations on another person, and their actions reflect your expectations.
		+ If your boss is consistently unhappy with your work, you will feel threatened by a request to “see me in my office first thing Monday morning”
6. **K**
	* Your background knowledge affects how you interpret a situation.
		+ Your friend was just dumped by his girlfriend and laid off at work all in the same week. You will interpret his aloof behaviour differently than you would if you were unaware of what happened.
7. **S**
	* If you feel confident, you will have a positive interpretation.
	* If you feel insecure, you will have a negative interpretation.

Changing Schemas

* First impressions can change very through repeated exposure to

 information.

* + We like to maintain our existing about the world.
	+ We preserve a reality that our expectations
	+ We often do things that cause others to our impressions of them
	+ We subtly lead people to behave with our expectations
* Create a list of five ways you can change your schemas, based on what you know about psychology. Explain briefly why they work.

Here are some helpful questions.

* + How do you impart change?
	+ What affects change?
	+ Who is most susceptible to change?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**SOCIAL PERCEPTION**

**What is social perception?**

**How are social perceptions formed?**

**Factors that cause us to notice some messages and ignore others:**

1. Repetitious stimuli get noticed.
2. Changes get noticed.
3. Personal motives affect perceptions.

**What are some problems in forming impressions of people and situations?**

*fundamental attribution error –* a tendency to overestimate the role of personal factors and underestimate the influence of situations

*Example:*

*self-fulfilling prophecy –* once we form an impression of someone, we tend to interpret that person’s later behaviour in ways that seem to fit our impression

* Our first impression of someone may shape the way we treat that person which, in turn, may influence his or her actual behaviour

*Example:*

**COMMUNICATION** **What is communication?**

**What are the purposes of communication?**

**What are the different means of communication?**

* Nonverbal communication

* Speech
* Written
* Anytime a message is sent, received and decoded

**What are common influences on perception?**

1. *The senses*
2. *Age*
3. *Health*
4. Fatigue
5. *Hunger*
6. *Biological cycles*

**Judgments and Impression Formation**

Five types of schemas help us to classify ourselves and others:

1. *Physical Constructs* classify people according to their appearance:
2. *Role Constructs* use social position

1. *Interaction Constructs* focus on social behaviour
2. *Psychological Constructs* help us classify peoples’ perceived psychological state

1. *Membership Constructs* help us to identify others according to the group in which they belong

**Biases that influence we form impressions of other people**

- people bring their own personal way of looking at the world
- each person has a set of unstated assumptions about certain types of people in general

a) *Positivity Bias*: impressions of others which are positive rather than negative

Examples:

b) *Negativity Effect* - impressions will be influenced more by negative than by positive information

Examples:

c) *Primacy/Accessibility*:  The tendency to form an impression of a person based on the initial information we learn about him or her

Examples:

d) *Self-fulfilling prophecy*:  when a person's expectations of an event make an outcome more likely to occur

Examples:

**Prejudice**

*Prejudice:* positive or negative attitude based on information or knowledge that is either illogical, unrelated to reality, or a distortion of fact, and that is unjustifiably generalized to all the members of a group.

* consists of 3 components:
 a) cognitive – stereotypes

 b) affective – emotions

 c) behavioural – discrimination

**Task Three: Prejudice Research Assignment**

Choose a group of people that you feel society has a prejudice against.

* Research the group of people
* Identify common stereotypes
* Identify common emotions
* Identify common discriminations made toward the group
* Research three different positive examples from this group.
* Create a brief (1 paragraph) blurb that highlights positive qualities in this group.

Cite all your research! Include the website where you find the info in a bibliography.

**Heuristics**

*Heuristics* are people follow in order to make judgments quickly and efficiently.

*3 Types*

1. The Availability heuristic
2. The Representative heuristic
3. Anchoring heuristic

**Task Five**

After the game, write a tweet (or send the tweet to @MissThibeault with the hashtag #Psych20) with your personal belief statement about how the world works.

**Defense Mechanisms**

* When we use  we do not allow ourselves to remain aware of painful material; we push it out of consciousness. Repression is usually unhealthy.
* When we engage in , we refuse to admit that anything bad has happened. In some ways, denial is similar to repression. With repression, though, we are at least partly aware of the problem, and then we push it out of consciousness. With denial, we do not let the problem into consciousness in the first place.
* Sometimes we have trouble directly expressing what we feel because of the threat (real or imagined) that something terrible will happen as a result. So we  our feelings elsewhere or on someone else, engaging in displacement.
* In , what we express is the opposite of what we really feel. Reaction formation is sometimes a little hard to see in operation, since we cannot read people's minds.
* When the emotions we feel are too overwhelming, we may try to  them altogether. Talking coolly and rationally about a tragedy as if it were simply an event that we had observed is called intellectualization. We have taken all of the feelings out of our description.
* **Identification**  occurs when we are mistreated for a long time by someone much more powerful than we are, and begin to take on that person's characteristics. We begin to identify with him or her, or try to gain favour.
* With  we defend ourselves by "moving backward" and behaving like children. This defense is an extreme reaction to the frustration of having to be an adult and take responsibility. We regress to a time when we were helpless children and someone had to take care of us.
* With  we explain what we do in such a way that we avoid any responsibility for a bad outcome.
* refers to the process of mentally giving to someone else our own thoughts or feelings. A continued pattern of such behavior is self-destructive, since it does not help us face up to how we might be causing the problem.
* occurs when we channel our emotional energy into a constructive or creative activity. It is the only defense mechanism that is truly healthy and adaptive.

**Self Understanding**

*The self-concept has four components:*

1. Self-image
2. Self-esteem
3. Ideal-self
4. Self-efficacy

*Four ways children's self-esteem can be improved:*

**Development of Self Concept**

**self-concept** -

*How does the self-concept develop?*

* Social Identity
* Gender Identity

* Self-perception
* Social comparison

**Culture and the Self**

**Culture:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Individualistic cultures (West)** | **Collectivist cultures (East)** |
| * Self is separate, unique individual; should be independent, self-sufficient.
* Individuals should take care of themselves and immediate family.
* Many flexible group memberships; friends based on shared interests and activities.
* Reward for individual achievement and initiative; individual decisions encouraged; individual credit and blame assigned.
* High value on autonomy, change, youth, individual security, equality.
 | * People belong to extended families or in-groups; “we” or group orientation.
* Person should take care of extended family before Self.
* Emphasis on belonging to a very few permanent in-groups which have a strong influence over the person.
* Reward for contribution to group goals and well-being; co-operation with in-group members; group decisions valued; credit and blame shared.
* High value on duty, order, tradition, age, group security, status and hierarchy
 |

**Gender and the Self**

**Gender identity** is our classification of ourselves (and others) as male or female, boy or girl.

**Gender role** refers to the behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and so on which a particular society either expects from, or considers appropriate to, males and females on the basis of their biological sex.  To conform to gender roles means to be masculine or feminine

*See supplementary notes.*

**Self-Schema and Identity**

Most people have a complex self-concept with many self-schemas.  These include an array of “ ”, or future-oriented schema of what we would like to be (our ideal-self).  Visions of future possible selves may influence some of the decisions we make, such as career choices.

We learn about ourselves through and observations of our , and then organize this information into .

**The False Self**

As they try to sort through their possible (and multiple) selves, adolescents frequently take on a , acting in ways that they know are contrary to the core of their being even if they are not sure what that core being is.  Adolescents display three distinct types of false selves:

* The
* Adolescent perceives that the real self is rejected by parents and peers
* Adolescents who adopt a false self in order to be accepted tend to feel worthless, depressed, and hopeless; they engage in self-betrayal to hide their true nature.  They also report low levels of real self-understanding.
* The
* This second type of false self arises from a wish to impress or please others.
* Those who adopt it appear to be less debilitated psychologically, and to have a greater self-understanding, than those whose false selves arise from a sense of rejection.
* The
* This type of false self is one that adolescents try out “just to see how it feels”
* Compared with adolescents who engage in the first two types of false behaviour, these adolescents report the highest levels of self-esteem and self-knowledge

**Socio-cultural Influences on Identity Development**

**Identity Management**

*Self-presentational techniques that people use in everyday life:*

* *Ingratiation*
* *self-promotion*
* *basking in reflected glory*
* you can appear impressive to others because you know or associate with impressive people
	+ *self-handicapping*

**Mass Media**

**mass media:**

**What influence does the media have?**

* Newspaper readership has been dropping …because people no longer believe what the media tells them
* Television’s coverage of violence also influences our perception: Although violent crime has been dropping since 1992, 75% of Canadians think crime is getting worse

**What influence does the media have on developing aggression and violence, especially in children?**

* children see more than 100 000 violent episodes and some 20 000 murders on television before reaching adolescence
* Aggressive children watch more media violence, identify more with violent characters, and believe that the violence they observe reflects real life than non-aggressive children.

**What influence does the Internet have?**

* recent research: Canadians are spending more time at their computers than in front of the television

Self-Concept Development Project

Create something (a video, a pamphlet, a board game, an online activity, etc.) to help the grade nines develop a positive self-concept. You may work in partners; however, you may choose to work individually. Keep in mind that if you work in partners, I am expecting a product worthy of 6+ hours of work, whereas individually, I am expecting a product worthy of 3+ hours of work.

Your project must help with building a positive:

* Self-Image
* Self-Esteem
* Ideal-Self
* Self-Efficacy

To do this, you must make reference to:

* Heuristics
* Attribution
* Social Schemas
* Social Perception
* Communication

This project is due on . You have to work on this project in class. You will present this project in small groups.

**Checklist**Project includes:

* Something to help the grade nines improve their self-concept (use all four aspects)
* A write up that makes references to heuristics, attribution, social schemas, social perception, and communication.

**Assessment**

You will be given a mark out of five each day for your work ethic, behaviour, and productivity.

Your project will be evaluated on the rubric attached.

NAME:

**SELF-CONCEPT PROJECT EVALUATION**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Self-Concept | The project covers all four aspects of self-concept adequately. | The project covers three aspects of self-concept adequately. | The project covers two aspects of self-concept adequately. | The project covers one aspect of self-concept adequately. |
| References | The project adequately addresses all of the following: heuristics, attribution, social schemas, social perception, and communication. | The project adequately addresses four of the following: heuristics, attribution, social schemas, social perception, and communication. | The project adequately addresses three of the following: heuristics, attribution, social schemas, social perception, and communication. | The project adequately addresses two or fewer of the following: heuristics, attribution, social schemas, social perception, and communication. |
| Positivity | The project will clearly have a positive impact for the audience. | The project may have a positive impact for the audience. | It is unclear whether or not the project will have a positive impact for the audience. | The project clearly will not have a positive impact for the audience. |
| Creativity | The project displays a very creative approach. | The project displays a somewhat creative approach. | The project has somewhat creative aspects. | The project is not creative. |
| Daily Work | Students work diligently every day for the entire class. | Students work diligently for most of the class each day. | Students work diligently for most classes most of the time. | Students work diligently only half the time. |