

General Psychology Small Group Activities

1. Research in Psychology

The purpose of this activity is to help students understand and apply different research methods (case study, survey, naturalistic observation, correlation, experimentation).

- a) Students are instructed to find their base groups and identify who in the group will fill the following roles: recorder, checker, and reporter.
- b) They are provided two variables: childhood nutrition and academic performance.
- c) In their group, they will complete the following (roughly 10-15 minutes are provided):
 - 1) Develop a theory
 - 2) Develop a hypothesis
 - 3) Select a research method and describe how it will be used to test their hypothesis
- d) Each group is provided a small amount of time (approximately 1 minute) to share their theory, hypothesis, and research method with the rest of the class.

2. Stages of Development

This activity is supposed to allow the students to understand the biopsychosocial approach to development while learning about milestones in each stage of development.

- a) Students are instructed to find their base groups and identify who in the group will fill the following roles: recorder, checker, and reporter.*

*This activity is best completed with 7-8 groups. At times, new groups are selected just for this activity.

- b) The group is given a specific stage of development (infancy, early childhood, middle/late childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood).
- c) In their group, they will identify developmental milestones/changes in the following categories:
 - 1) Biological
 - 2) Psychological/cognitive (Piaget's cognitive development)
 - 3) Social (Erikson's psychosocial development)

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4) Moral (Kohlberg's moral development)

d) Each group is provided a small amount of time (approximately 2-3 minutes) to "teach" the rest of the class about their stage of development.

3. Perceptual Organization & Interpretation

The purpose of this activity is for students to apply concepts about perception to an optical illusion.

a) Students are instructed to find their base groups and identify who in the group will fill the following roles: recorder, checker, and reporter.

b) Each group is provided 1-2 optical illusion cards (Psychobox: A Box of Psychological Games ISBN 978-1-59030-170-8)

c) Each group is required to identify the perceptual explanation for the optical illusion.

d) Each group is provided a small amount of time (approximately 1 minute) to describe and explain the optical illusion.

4. Well-Structured & Ill-Structured Problem Solving (this can be done in a small or large group)

This activity requires students to experience problem solving when faced with a well-structured vs. an ill-structured problem. Before and after the activity, the classroom discussion focuses on problem solving strategies (algorithms, heuristics, & insight).

a) Students are provided a math problem (well-structured) and given 1 minute to complete it. It is stressed by the instructor that completing the problem within the minute is not necessary or expected.

Problem: 3982×624

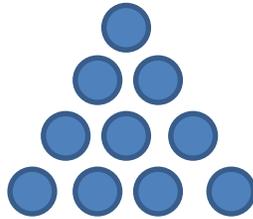
b) Four times during the minute of problem solving, every 15 seconds, the students are asked to assess how close they are to solving the problem (Likert Scale: 1 - nowhere near complete to 7 - already complete)

c) Students then report which number (1-7) they selected at the end of each of the 4 time intervals.

*A gradual progression toward 7 should be the trend, demonstrating the process of problem solving when using an algorithm. (e.g. 2, 4, 5, 7)

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e) Students are then provided an ill-structured problem with one minute to complete it. Steps b and c are repeated. *The student reports should no longer be gradual but there should be reports 1 and then 7 demonstrating the insight problem solving strategy.



Directions: Move 3 circles to flip the triangle upside down.