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**Outlines, Classroom**

**Demonstrations and Exercises, and**

**Assignments and Projects**

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Each chapter in this section of the manual is divided into three sections. Chapters start with an *Outline* of the corresponding textbook chapter and its topical organization. The *Classroom Demonstrations and Exercises* section contains activities that complement one or more of the topics covered in the chapter. Each activity can be carried out during class and most take fewer than 15 minutes. The *Assignments and Projects* section contains activities designed to help students learn about personality by getting actively involved in the topic. Many of these activities can be completed in a relatively short time, such as by collecting data between class meetings. Others may require most if not all of the term. Several of the activities include answer sheets and other materials that can be photocopied for class use.

**Chapter 1**

**What Is Personality?**

**Chapter Outline**

1. The Person and the Situation

2. Defining Personality

3. Six Approaches to Personality

a) Two Examples: Aggression and Depression

i) Example 1: Aggression

ii) Example 2: Depression

4. Personality and Culture

5. The Study of Personality: Theory, Application, Assessment, and Research

6. Summary

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**Classroom Demonstrations and Exercises**

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**Introduction to Personality Research: A Quiz**

Like research in many areas in psychology, personality research is sometimes criticized for demonstrating what everyone supposedly knows from common sense. The following exercise is designed to quickly get past this issue and to introduce some of the topics to be covered in the class. Have students take the short quiz on the following page. Of course, most instructors have seen this type of quiz before. All of the answers are false, but the quiz is short enough that few students should catch on.

**PERSONALITY RESEARCH TEST**

**Directions**: Indicate you believe each of the statements below is whether TRUE or FALSE.

T F 1. People who are tense and anxious are less likely to laugh at something funny than are people who are relaxed.

T F 2. Angry people who are allowed to “let off steam” (such as by hitting someone with a harmless foam bat) are less likely to act aggressively than are angry people not allowed to release tension.

T F 3. Extraverts—people who enjoy excitement and social gatherings—are more sensitive to external stimulation than are introverted people.

T F 4. People who are described as introverts usually do not like other people very much, which explains why they prefer quieter, less social circumstances.

T F 5. A businessperson who is willing to take high financial risks in order to achieve a potentially large payoff probably has a high need to achieve.

T F 6. A Type A person typically works harder than a Type B person regardless of how trivial or simple the task.

T F 7. Students who suffer from loneliness usually overcome this problem when they start attending a large university with a lot of people their age.

T F 8. A couple is most likely to have a happy relationship when the man is masculine and the woman is feminine.

T F 9. Children are less likely to imitate the aggression they see portrayed on television when the person who acts aggressively is the hero and the aggression is seen as justified.

T F 10. A person who fails repeatedly on a task and decides there is nothing he or she can do about it will respond by working harder on the next task he or she faces.

Total number of correct answers: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Defining Personality**

Before students have read the first chapter of the text, write the word *personality* on the board and ask them to define it. Write their answers on the board and ask them whether the definition captures their understanding of personality. Of course, you can ask difficult and challenging questions when the class falls silent. The point is to get students to think about what personality is and is not and perhaps what should be covered in a course on personality. The exercise can also demonstrate the difficulty psychologists face when trying to define even such “obvious” concepts as personality.

Another variation of this exercise is to write the word *personality* on the board and then ask students to call out single words that are related to that term (like a word *association task*). Then have students do a form of q-sort where later they can assign each of those words to one or more of the six major perspectives noted in the chapter section addressing the approaches.

**Personal Versus Situational Causes of Behavior**

Pick a behavior that has many obvious causes and write it on the board. I have had success with “Cheating among high school students.” Ask students to think of some of the reasons why, for example, high school students cheat. As the students call out their answers, write the responses in one of two columns. One of these columns is for personal factors—for example, *low self-esteem*, *poor at math*, and *lack of personal ethics*—whereas the other column is for situational causes—for example, *peer pressure*, *lack of surveillance*, and *everybody’s doing it*. After both columns contain several answers, ask students to guess what the two columns represent. This exercise quickly demonstrates the notion that behaviors are caused by both personal and situational causes. I also use this exercise to explain that this class is focused more on the personal side of the question.

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**Assignments and Projects**

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**Familiarizing Students with Personality Journals**

Have students go to the library and familiarize themselves with the various journals that publish personality research. Students can be given different assignments, depending on their background. You may require them to simply identify some of the more popular topics in the journals. You also might require students to write a brief summary of one or more article. After students have read Chapter 2, you might also ask them to identify the independent variables, dependent variables, and hypotheses in the studies reported. Some of the journals students might want to examine are:

*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*

(Personality Processes and Individual Differences section)

*Journal of Personality*

*Journal of Research in Personality*

*Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (available on InfoTrac)

*European Journal of Personality*

Depending on their particular interests, the students may also want to look at related journals, such as the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, and *Developmental Psychology*.

**Using the Six Approaches to Understanding Personality**

After students have read Chapter 1, have them identify a person they know or know of who suffers or has suffered from some kind of psychological disorder. Then have students speculate about how a psychologist from each of the six approaches might explain the person’s disorder. Instruct students to write a paragraph for each approach. The purpose of the assignment is to get students thinking about and starting to use the different approaches. Thus, you might want to emphasize that there are no incorrect answers (at least at this point in the class).

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**MindTap Features**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Where Is It?** | **What Is It?** | **Why It Matters?** | **Seat Time?** | **Points?** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| START: Chapter 1 Mastery Training | Chapter 1 MindTap Assets | Learning engine that presents concepts to students, adapting to each student’s performance to help them learn efficiently and effectively, and master core concepts. | Students who use this learning engine can improve their course grade by ~13% (Homer & Plass, 2013). | Minutes each day for at least one week to reach Level 1 mastery | Varies |
| READ: Chapter 1 What Is Personality? | Chapter 1 MindTap Assets | Read about the definition of personality and the major approaches to how it is explained. | Students who prefer a digital, e-book format will benefit from this MindTap asset. | This varies based on whether your reading pace | N/A |
| DO: Chapter 1 Quiz | Chapter 1 MindTap Assets | Test your knowledge of all you have learned about in this chapter. | Reinforce chapter concepts and test student’s knowledge and comprehension of material. | 20–30 minutes | Varies |