

ACTIVITY 1-1

LEARNING TO SEE



Objectives:

By the end of this activity, you will be able to:

1. Describe some of the problems in making good observations.
2. Improve your observational skills.

Time Required to Complete Activity: 25 minutes

Materials:

lab sheets for Activity 1-1
pencil

Safety Precautions:

None

Procedure:

1. Your teacher will provide you with Photograph 1 and a question sheet.
2. Study Photograph 1 for 15 seconds.
3. When directed by your teacher, turn over your question paper and answer as many of the questions as you can in three minutes.
4. Repeat the process for Photographs 2 and 3.
5. Discuss the answers to the questions below with your classmates.

Questions (for class discussion):

1. Did everyone answer all of the questions correctly?
2. If everyone viewed the same photograph, list some possible reasons why their answers differed.



ACTIVITY 1-2

YOU'RE AN EYEWITNESS!

Objectives:

By the end of this activity, you will be able to:

1. Assess the validity of eyewitness accounts of a crime.
2. Test your own powers of observation.

Time Required to Complete Activity: 45 minutes

Materials:

(per student)

A copy of the scene of Jane's Restaurant

A copy of the questionnaire concerning Jane's Restaurant

Safety Precautions:

None

Procedure:

1. Obtain the image of a crime scene from your teacher.
2. Study the image for three minutes.
3. When given the signal, turn over the image, and answer the questions about the crime scene.

Questions:

1. How well did you do in remembering the details in this picture?
2. What do the results of this activity say, if anything, to you about the usefulness of eyewitness accounts in a court?
3. What factors influenced your observations?
4. How could you improve your observation skills?

ACTIVITY 1-3

WHAT INFLUENCES OUR OBSERVATIONS?



Objectives:

By the end of this activity, you will be able to:

1. Test your ability to make observations during events.
2. Design an experiment involving a television or print commercial that demonstrates how different factors influence one's ability to observe.

Introduction:

Familiar TV commercials can be the basis for testing your observational skills.

Time Required to Complete Activity: 45 minutes

Materials:

videotape of a commercial provided by your teacher
question sheets provided by your teacher
pen or pencil

Safety Precautions:

None

Procedure:

1. Watch the commercial taped by your teacher.
2. Answer the questions on the sheet provided.

Questions:

1. How many people are in the video?
2. Describe the main character(s) in the commercial in terms of
 - a. Size
 - b. Age
 - c. Skin color
 - d. Height
 - e. Weight
 - f. Hair: style, color, length
 - g. Clothing
 - h. Hat
 - i. Glasses
 - j. Distinguishing features
 - k. Jewelry
 - l. Beard or no beard
 - m. Any physical limitations



3. Describe the other people in the commercial.
4. Describe the area where the video was located.
5. What furniture, if any, was in the commercial?
6. Was the time noted?
7. Was it possible to determine the season?
8. What were the people doing in the commercial?
9. Were there any cars in the commercial? If so, describe the:
 - a. Model
 - b. Year
 - c. Color
 - d. License plate number
10. How long was the video?



Student-Designed Commercial Activity:

Design an activity involving commercials that would demonstrate how different factors influence our ability to observe. You should include the following:

1. Question
2. Hypothesis
3. Experimental design
 - a. Control
 - b. Variable
4. Observations
 - a. What you will measure and how you will measure it
 - b. Include data tables
5. Conclusion based on your data

Suggested Factors to Be Tested:

1. Will the number of people in the room affect someone's observational skills?
2. Will someone's observational skills be affected if he or she is listening to music while making the observation?
3. Are men less observant of the surrounding environment if the commercial features an attractive woman?
4. Are women less observant of the surrounding environment if the commercial features a handsome man?
5. Are young people less observant of an older person in a commercial as opposed to a younger person?

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6. Are older people less observant of younger people in a commercial as opposed to an older person?
 7. Will famous people (e.g., actors, actresses, singers, athletes) in a commercial encourage someone to watch the commercial and therefore be more observant of the product information?
 8. Does racial background affect someone's ability to recognize someone of a different race?
 9. Does the color of someone's clothing make the person more noticeable?
 10. Are bald men more difficult to recognize than men who have hair?
 11. If the person wears a hat, does that make him or her more difficult to recognize or more likely to be recognized?
 12. Does a person's style of clothing make him or her more noticeable or less? (For example, are there differences with responses with a man in a suit as opposed to a man in jeans?)
 13. Does the presence of a beard make someone less noticeable or more noticeable?
 14. Is an overweight person less likely to be observed than someone of normal weight?

Successful advertisement agencies realize that their commercials need to appeal to that segment of the population that is most likely to purchase the product. The better they target their commercial to the prospective buyers, the greater the chance that particular audience will listen and observe the information given in that commercial.

As a result of these commercial observational activities, students will be able to note how many factors influence our ability to observe. Police collect eyewitness accounts of a crime understanding that this is not the most reliable source of information used in solving a crime.