

in an impressive performance. In addition, being part of a group may encourage members to take advantage of the opportunity to reap the rewards of the group effort without taxing themselves unnecessarily.

Group polarization is the tendency of a group to make more extreme decisions than the group members would make individually. Studies about group polarization usually have participants give their opinions individually, then group them to discuss their decisions, and then have the group make a decision. Explanations for group polarization include the idea that in a group, individuals may be exposed to new, persuasive arguments they had not thought of themselves and that the responsibility for an extreme decision in a group is diffused across the group's many members.

Groupthink, a term coined by Janis, describes the tendency for some groups to make bad decisions. Groupthink occurs when group members suppress their reservations about the ideas supported by the group. As a result, a kind of false unanimity is encouraged, and flaws in the group's decisions may be overlooked. Highly cohesive groups involved in making risky decisions seem to be at particular risk for groupthink.

Sometimes people get swept up by a group and do things they never would have done if on their own such as looting or rioting. This loss of self-restraint occurs when group members feel anonymous and aroused, and this phenomenon is known as *deindividuation*.

One famous experiment that showed not only how such conditions can cause people to deindividuate but also the effect of roles and the situation in general, is Phillip Zimbardo's prison experiment. Zimbardo assigned a group of Stanford students to either play the role of prison guard or prisoner. All were dressed in uniforms and the prisoners were assigned numbers. The prisoners were locked up in the basement of the psychology building, and the guards were put in charge of their treatment. The students took to their assigned roles perhaps too well, and the experiment had to be ended early because of the cruel treatment the guards were inflicting on the prisoners.

Practice Questions

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

- Which of the following suggestions is most likely to reduce the hostility felt between antagonistic groups?
 - Force the groups to spend a lot of time together.
 - Encourage the groups to avoid each other as much as possible.
 - Give the groups a task that cannot be solved unless they work together.
 - Set up a program in which speakers attempt to persuade the groups to get along.
 - Punish the groups whenever they treat each other badly.

2. On Monday, Tanya asked her teacher to postpone Tuesday's test until Friday. After her teacher flatly refused, Tanya asked the teacher to push the test back one day, to Wednesday. Tanya is using the compliance strategy known as
- (A) foot-in-the-door.
 - (B) norms of reciprocity.
 - (C) compromise.
 - (D) strategic bargaining.
 - (E) door-in-the-face.
3. In the Milgram studies, the dependent measure was
- (A) the highest level of shock supposedly administered.
 - (B) the location of the learner.
 - (C) the length of the line.
 - (D) the number of people in the group.
 - (E) the instructions given by the experimenter.
4. The tendency of people to look toward others for cues about the appropriate way to behave when confronted by an emergency is known as
- (A) bystander intervention.
 - (B) pluralistic ignorance.
 - (C) modeling.
 - (D) diffusion of responsibility.
 - (E) conformity.
5. Advertisements are made more effective when the communicators are
- I. attractive.
 - II. famous.
 - III. perceived as experts.
- (A) II only
 - (B) III only
 - (C) I and II
 - (D) II and III
 - (E) I, II, and III
6. Your new neighbor seems to know everything about ancient Greece that your social studies teacher says during the first week of school. You conclude that she is brilliant. You do not consider that she might already have learned about ancient Greece in her old school. You are evidencing
- (A) the self-fulfilling prophecy effect.
 - (B) pluralistic ignorance.
 - (C) confirmation bias.
 - (D) the fundamental attribution error.
 - (E) cognitive dissonance.

7. In Asch's conformity study, approximately what percentage of participants gave at least one incorrect response?
- (A) 30
 - (B) 40
 - (C) 50
 - (D) 60
 - (E) 70
8. Janine has always hated the color orange. However, once she became a student at Princeton, she began to wear a lot of orange Princeton Tiger clothing. The discomfort caused by her long-standing dislike of the color orange and her current ownership of so much orange-and-black-striped clothing is known as
- (A) cognitive dissonance.
 - (B) contradictory concepts.
 - (C) conflicting motives.
 - (D) opposing cognitions.
 - (E) inconsistent ideas.
9. When Pasquale had his first oboe solo in the orchestra concert, his performance was far worse than it was when he rehearsed at home. A phenomenon that helps explain Pasquale's poor performance is known as
- (A) social loafing.
 - (B) groupthink.
 - (C) deindividuation.
 - (D) social impairment.
 - (E) diffusion of responsibility.
10. Kelley's attribution theory says that people use which of the following kinds of information in explaining events?
- (A) conformity, reliability, and validity
 - (B) consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness
 - (C) uniqueness, explanatory power, and logic
 - (D) salience, importance, and reason
 - (E) distinctiveness, conformity, and salience
11. After your school's football team has a big win, students in the halls can be heard saying "*We* are awesome." The next week, after the team loses to the last-place team in the league, the same students lament that "*They* were terrible." The difference in these comments illustrates
- (A) the fundamental attribution error.
 - (B) self-serving bias.
 - (C) the self-fulfilling prophecy effect.
 - (D) the false consensus effect.
 - (E) conformity.

12. Which of the following is the best example of prejudice?
- (A) Billy will not let girls play on his hockey team.
 - (B) Santiago dislikes cheerleaders.
 - (C) Athena says she can run faster than anybody on the playground.
 - (D) Mr. Tamp calls on boys more often than girls.
 - (E) Ginny thinks all Asians are smart.
13. On their second date, Megan confides in Francisco that she still loves to watch *Rugrats*. He, in turn, tells her that he still cries when he watches *Bambi*. These two young lovers will be brought closer together through this process of
- (A) self-disclosure.
 - (B) deindividuation.
 - (C) in-group bias.
 - (D) dual sharing.
 - (E) open communication.
14. On the first day of class, Mr. Simpson divides his class into four competing groups. On the fifth day of school, Jody is sent to the principal for kicking members of the other groups. Mr. Simpson can be faulted for encouraging the creation of
- (A) group polarization.
 - (B) deindividuation.
 - (C) out-group bias.
 - (D) superordinate goals.
 - (E) groupthink.
15. Rosenthal and Jacobson's "Pygmalion in the Classroom" study showed that
- (A) people's expectations of others can influence the behavior of those others.
 - (B) attitudes are not always good predictors of behavior.
 - (C) contact is not sufficient to break down prejudices.
 - (D) people like to think that others get what they deserve.
 - (E) cohesive groups often make bad decisions.

ANSWERS TO PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. (C) A task that requires groups to cooperate is an example of a superordinate goal. Such superordinate goals are effective in breaking down hostility between groups. Contact between antagonistic groups without superordinate goals is less successful, and simply avoiding members of the other group is unlikely to decrease the intergroup hostility. While guest speakers may be able to influence the group members' attitudes, they will be less effective than the use of superordinate goals. Punishing the groups may actually increase the antagonism between them.

2. (E) Tanya made a large request and, when refused, came back with a smaller, more reasonable sounding request. This compliance strategy is known as door-in-the-face. Foot-in-the-door is when one makes a small request and, once that request is agreed to, follows up with a larger request. Had Tanya brought her teacher an apple and then made her request she would have been attempting to capitalize on norms of reciprocity, the idea that one good turn deserves another. Although Tanya is, in fact, attempting to broker a compromise and engage in some bargaining, the strategy she used has a more specific, psychological name.
3. (A) The dependent measure in the Milgram experiment was the level of shock the participants thought they were administering. While Milgram manipulated a number of independent variables including the location of the learner relative to the teacher, the dependent variable he measured was always how far the participants would go in shocking the learners. The length of the line is a reference to the Asch conformity experiment. No groups were involved in the Milgram experiment. The experimenter's instructions did not vary between conditions.
4. (B) Pluralistic ignorance is defined as the tendency of people to look toward others for cues about how to act, particularly in emergency situations. Pluralistic ignorance is often tested in bystander intervention studies. Pluralistic ignorance can be seen as a kind of modeling or conformity that occurs in emergencies. However, pluralistic ignorance is a superior answer due to its clear relationship to emergency situations. Diffusion of responsibility is the finding that the more people who witness an emergency, the less likely any one is to intervene.
5. (E) Communications are made more effective when communicators are attractive, famous, and/or perceived as experts. All of these factors enhance the persuasiveness of an appeal.
6. (D) Your failure to consider the role of situational factors in explaining your new neighbor's knowledge of ancient Greece is known as the fundamental attribution error. The self-fulfilling prophecy effect is when one person's expectations affect another person's behavior. Pluralistic ignorance is the tendency to look to others for hints about how one is supposed to act in certain situations. Confirmation bias is the tendency to focus on information that supports one's initial ideas. Cognitive dissonance is the tension felt when one holds two contradictory ideas.
7. (E) In Asch's conformity study, approximately 70 percent of participants gave at least one incorrect answer.

8. **(A)** Janine is experiencing cognitive dissonance. The combination of her hatred of the color orange and her ownership of a lot of orange clothing results in a tension called cognitive dissonance. It will motivate her to reduce the tension by either changing her opinion of orange or radically altering her wardrobe. All of the other terms are made up.
9. **(D)** When the presence of other people inhibits someone's performance, social impairment, the opposite of social facilitation, has occurred. Social loafing is the tendency of people to exert less effort in a group than they would if they were alone. Groupthink is the idea that because group members are often loathe to express opinions different from those of the majority, some groups fall prey to poor decisions. Deindividuation is when people in a group lose their self-restraint due to arousal and anonymity. Diffusion of responsibility is one way to explain the inverse relationship between group size and the expression of prosocial behavior.
10. **(B)** According to Kelley, people use information about consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness when analyzing the cause of people's actions. The other terms, while related to psychology, are not generally important in attribution theory.
11. **(B)** The students in the school are evidencing self-serving bias, the tendency to take more credit for good outcomes than bad ones. When the football team wins, they want to identify with them and therefore say "We are awesome." When that same team loses, the students distance themselves from the players, explaining that "They were terrible." Fundamental attribution error is a different attributional bias. It explains that people overestimate the role of personal factors when explaining other people's behavior. The self-fulfilling prophecy effect is the finding that people's expectations about others can influence the behavior of those others. The false consensus effect is another example of an attributional bias. It says that people overestimate the number of people who share their beliefs. Finally, conformity is the tendency for people to go along with a group.
12. **(B)** A prejudice is an attitude, while discrimination involves an action. Santiago has a negative attitude or prejudice toward cheerleaders. Billy and Mr. Tamp are engaging in discrimination by acting differently toward different groups of people. Athena may be really fast or overconfident, but she is not evidencing a prejudice. Ginny's belief that all Asians are smart is a stereotype that may or may not lead her to have some kind of prejudice against Asians.
13. **(A)** Self-disclosure is the process by which two people become closer by sharing intimate details about themselves. Deindividuation is when people in a group lose their self-restraint due to arousal and anonymity. In-group bias is the preference that people show for members of their own groups. Dual sharing is a made-up term, and open communication, while healthy in a relationship, does not describe this specific exchange.

14. (C) By dividing his students into groups, Mr. Simpson fostered the development of in-group and out-group bias, the belief that members of one's own group are superior to members of other groups. While Jody's aggressive behavior cannot be fully explained by Mr. Simpson's grouping, the fact that he attacks only members of other groups suggests that out-group bias may play a role. Group polarization is the tendency of groups to take more extreme positions than those taken by their individual members. Since Jody acts alone and not as part of a group, his aggression cannot be seen as an example of deindividuation. Superordinate goals are helpful in reducing conflict between groups by making their success contingent upon their cooperation. Groupthink is the idea that because group members often avoid expressing opinions different from those of the majority, some groups fall prey to poor decisions.

15. (A) Rosenthal and Jacobson's "Pygmalion in the Classroom" study illustrated the self-fulfilling prophecy effect, the ability for people's expectations about others to influence how those others behave. Attitudes do not always predict behavior well, as LaPiere's study evidenced. Contact is not usually sufficient to break down prejudice. The just-world belief tells us that people like to think that others get what they deserve. Cohesive groups sometimes engage in groupthink, resulting in bad decisions.