

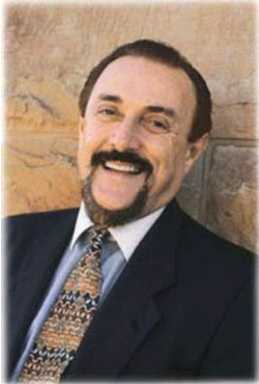
Psychology Bridging Work – Task 5 – Introducing Social Influence?



Psychology – The science of the mind and behaviour



This task is designed to give you an idea of the content in the social influence unit, and to bridge the gap from GCSE to A-level. None of the tasks on this sheet go beyond what would be expected of a GCSE Psychology student.



Specification:

Conformity to social roles as investigated by Zimbardo.

Zimbardo et (1973) was interested in whether people would conform to a social role they were given. A mock prison was set up in the basement of the psychology department at Stanford University. Male student volunteers were psychologically and physically screened and the 24 most stable were randomly assigned to the role of 'prisoner' or 'guard'. Prisons were unexpectedly arrested at home, put

Key Concept

Conformity – a form of social influence that results from exposure to the majority position. It is the tendency for people to adopt the behaviour, attitudes and values of other members of a reference group.

through a delousing procedure, given a uniform and assigned an ID number. They were given 3 meals and 3 supervised toilet trips a day. Guards were given uniforms, clubs, whistles and wore reflective sunglasses. Zimbardo took the role of Prison Superintendent. The study was planned to last two weeks.

Key Concept

Social roles – the behaviours expected of an individual who occupies a given social position or status.

Key Concept

Deindividuation – the state of losing our sense of individuality and becoming less aware of our own responsibility for our actions.

How are the three key concepts shown within the study?

What **social roles** did participants in the study take on? _____

What steps were taken to ensure the **deindividuation** of participants? _____

How do you think participants will show **conformity**? _____

What do you think the results of this study were then? (how did prisoners and guards act)? Do you think it lasted for the intended amount of time?

Need some help with this? There are countless videos on YouTube relating to this study;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4txhN13y6A>

This is the one I would recommend watching, but be aware that it does feature some hard hitting content!

There is even a film you can watch, it is a 15, but again be aware that it features some hard hitting content, and that it is not completely accurate, but will give you some idea of the study.

Note – you do not need to watch these videos, they do feature some disturbing scenes, you should ask the advise of your parents first!

Lastly, think about how these key concepts are used in everyday life. What reasons do you think Zimbardo would give for making students wear correct school uniform?

Extension Work

Found this interesting? Want to know more? Research the subsequent studies related to Zimbardo's original prison study:

<http://www.bbcprisonstudy.org/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008crhv>