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# *Making Psychology Fun and Relevant, II*

*by  
Robert Leach*



*Relevance, Inc.*

FOURTEEN  
RELEVANCE EXERCISES  
FOR  
PSYCHOLOGY, II  
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I would like to thank all of you who have taken the time to share with me the success that you have had in using the activities from "Making Psychology Fun And Relevant." My intent in producing the book was more of a labor of love rather than entrepreneurial. It is extremely satisfying to know that the book was instrumental in exciting your students about psychology. Many of you have expressed that there is a considerable paucity of activities for psychology. Eighteen years ago, when I began teaching high school psychology, there were even less resources available. This served to motivate me to create my own activities which eventually were compiled for the book, "Making Psychology Fun And Relevant." I hope the limited published materials inspires you to create your own fun and relevant activities and you will also publish your efforts for the rest of us to benefit.

In the mean time, I have put together another book filled with cooperative learning activities that I am confident will be very successful with your students. "Making Psychology Fun And Relevant, Volume II," includes relevant topics such as decision making, dealing with stress, friendship, and romantic love just to name a few. The activities are meant to be performed in cooperative learning groups

but also can be used effectively as individual assignments. The students enjoy these because they relate to them and do not require the use of a text. You will like them because of the great discussions and the divergent, higher order thinking that results. I recommend that you use the activity entitled, "Pass The Paper And Pen" prior to having the students perform the cooperative learning activities. This activity serves as a fantastic warm up and team building exercise to get the youngsters working together. You may want to create your own pass the paper and pen "games" with crossword puzzles, word searches, or scattergories. I have used the game,"Scattergories" with great results. The students love playing the games and they create a great deal of positive feelings with their group members.

All of the activities can be completed in one or two class periods depending on your needs. Each activity includes a thorough explanation which will make the procedure clear to both teachers and students. I am confident you and your students will have as much success with these activities as I have enjoyed with mine!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pass The Paper And Pen	1
Stress And Its Influence On Behavior	3
Emotional Problems Of Teenagers	5
Risk Taking, Confidence, And Luck	7
Romantic Love	10
Self-esteem	12
Appearance And Interpersonal Attraction	14
Communication: Listening	16
Communication: Sharing Feelings	19
Friendship	21
Humor And Attraction	23
Home Environment: Raising Children	25
Pleasure And Happiness	27
Defense Mechanisms: Dealing With Frustration	30

Psychology  
Pass The Paper And Pen

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Our society has traditionally put a premium on self-reliance. Schools and businesses alike have practiced a Social Darwinian survival of the fittest mentality in theory. Today our life styles have brought about more and more service industries. Our ability to work with others and communicate effectively has become essential. Skills such as being a good listener, being polite, sharing responsibility, and having a good sense of humor are just as important as your competence. This class will incorporate activities in which you will work in groups. The success of your group and your own grade will be determined by your ability to cooperate. As in all businesses and athletic teams, your success can be impaired by just one weak link. With this in mind, it is in your best interest to be dependable. There are a few important considerations for you to remember when working in your group. First of all, there will be no put downs. Do not belittle your team members ideas. All of us work best with encouragement. When individuals in your group make good suggestions, tell them so. Second, you need to be a good listener. Let your colleagues finish their explanations before commenting. Often times, the people who are considered the best conversationalists are those that do little more than listen.

### Direction:

Before a group or team can work efficiently, camaraderie or good feelings must be built up amongst the group. In order to promote this we are going to periodically play extra credit games called "Pass The Paper And Pen." Each group will have one of these papers and a pen. I will ask you, for example, to list all the different name brands of clothing your group can think of in one minute. The two groups with the most on their list will get extra credit. The rules are that you must pass the paper and pen to another group member after you have written an entry on your list. If your team member cannot think of anything, the other group members can help. However, you should be relatively quiet so other groups do not hear your answers. This type

of activity will be done several times before your group works on an official cooperative learning session. In addition, we will periodically play "Pass The Paper And Pen" to keep your group working cohesively.

List:

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Psychology  
Stress And Its Influence On Behavior

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Stress is a psychological term that refers to an overload of pressure put on our bodies. The fast pace of modern life, the drive to be upwardly mobile, and many other factors has brought about a modern day phenomena known as "burnout." The most common occupation where this occurs is coaching. The pressure to win at all costs has been so detrimental to the health of great coaches that many had to retire. Professions like air traffic controllers, teaching, nursing, and police protection are just a few of the many occupations that involve a high degree of stress.

### Directions:

Discuss the questions within a group and be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class.

1. It was mentioned above that the fast pace of modern life as well as the desire to be upwardly mobile has brought about the phenomena known as stress. List five factors that cause stress for most teenagers.
2. List as many ways as you can that people use to deal with or reduce stress.
3. Many people are deciding to live simpler lives to reduce stress. People are refusing job promotions that require more work, living in smaller homes, and driving Honda's instead of BMW's. They are saying we want more quality and less quantity. Could you choose to live

more simply in order to live a more relaxed lyfe style? Why?

4. Many Americans choose to live further from L.A. so they can buy a nicer home. If you could have a better home but had to make a long commute fighting rush hour traffic, would you choose to live further from the city? Explain.

5. Given a choice between taking a vacation for two weeks at one resort in Hawaii or visiting ten European cities in fourteen days which would you choose? Why?

6. Do you feel that most stress comes from pressure we put on ourselves or from pressure that society and others place on us? Why?

7. Burnout and stress are terms that were made up by people that were too lazy and not tough enough to achieve their goals. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Psychology  
Emotional Problems of Teenagers

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction:

The time of adolescence can be a very traumatic time of life for most people. Some people believe that the emotional problems and pressures encountered at this time is the most stressful time of our lives. The desire to fit in and to be popular can certainly make it difficult to have healthy self esteem.

Directions:

Below is a list of areas that can cause emotional problems for high school students. Rank the categories in terms of which ones would be most likely to cause emotional problems. Then provide an explanation for why you ranked the category high or low.

Category	Explanation
___Peer Pressure	
___Physical Appearance	
___Intelligence	
___Athletic Ability	
___Popularity	
___Lack of Opposite Sex Friends	
___Parental Restrictions	
___Not Enough Time	
___Lack of Goals and Direction	
___Pressure to Get Good Grades	

\_\_\_Low Self Esteem

\_\_\_Dealing with Sexual Desires

\_\_\_Other

### Conclusions:

1. Traditionally, high schools tend to have cliques or "in groups" that are made up of athletes and cheer leaders. These people are considered popular. How is popularity determined at your school? What are the advantages and disadvantages of being considered popular?
2. One of the major areas of concern today for adults regarding high school students is the high incidence of teenage pregnancy. Do you believe it is reasonable for adults to expect teenagers to refrain from sexual intercourse? Why?
3. Educators across the country believe that students will achieve better in schools if they can be helped to establish career goals. Lack of goals has much to do with poor performance. Do you agree? Why?
4. There are many theories advanced as to why our society has so much difficulty with teenagers today. Lack of discipline in schools and families, the high divorce rate, and violence and sex on television are just a few of the many influences on young people that have had a detrimental impact. What do you believe are the most significant influences on the misbehavior of a growing number of teenagers?

Psychology  
Risk Taking, Confidence, and Luck

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

(To The Teacher: This is a great activity to tie in with St. Patrick's Day)

#### Introduction:

St. Patrick's Day is a traditional Irish holiday but is also celebrated throughout the world. People wear green and drink beer and Irish Coffee in celebration of the heritage of the Irish. A part of the heritage is the special "luck of the Irish." Legend has it that there are leprechauns that bring good fortune to Irish People.

In our society, many people get a great deal of enjoyment from risk taking ventures that involve at least some degree of luck. Psychologists believe that those that are confident are much more likely to take risks. Risk takers believe that their ability will carry them through any bad luck that they may encounter. They seem to enjoy the thrill or the "rush" that high risk activities create. Gambling, investing in real estate or the stock market, skydiving, and bungee jumping are just a few endeavors that require good fortune or luck. Today we are going to look at the issues of confidence, risk taking, and luck and the roles that they play in reaching your goals.

#### Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. List as many areas of our lives where you feel luck plays an important part in our success.
2. There are numerous high risk recreational activities that many people choose to partake in because of the thrill. Many others refrain for fear of bad luck. List 10 high risk yet exciting recreational

activities. Indicate which ones you would like to try by putting a check by them.

3. Research has shown that gamblers find it more thrilling to gamble on games they don't know about rather than in games where they are more knowledgeable. For example, a person who knows a great deal about football and very little about poker would prefer to gamble on poker. They want "luck" to be the reason that they win. Why do you suppose they feel this way?

4. Many Americans spend much income each year in an attempt to become rich by winning the lottery. Since their chances of winning are remote it would take a great deal of luck to win. Is this a worthwhile expenditure? Why?

5. Athletes as well as many other people have a lucky rabbit's foot or other superstitions that will supposedly bring good fortune. List five superstitions that are common. Why do you suppose so many people believe in superstitions? Explain.

6. Branch Rickey, the owner of the Dodgers when Jackie Robinson broke the color line, once said that "luck is the residue of design." He meant that people that work hard are much more likely to receive good luck in life than those that wait for things to happen. Do you

feel this is true? Explain.

7. Confident, risk taking people will experience more excitement and happiness in life than those who are fearful and cautious and are afraid of experiencing bad luck. Do you agree?

Psychology  
Romantic Love

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:**

The images most of us have about falling in love have been formulated by the motion picture industry. We believe that eventually we will meet some one who will physically, mentally, and emotionally sweep us off of our feet. Psychologists call this feeling limerence. Even if we do fall in love with some one, evidence suggests that, for most people, limerence will last only about two years. Since that is the case, some people think Americans would benefit from following the societies that prioritize practical concerns over romance in selecting partners.

**Directions:**

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Our society has a romantic notion of love. We become physically attracted, fall in love, and get married. Do you feel that loving is an emotion that we feel or a decision that we choose to make? Why?
2. Although falling in love implies people have no control over this emotion, many people formulate a list of qualities they would look for in a spouse. What are your top five qualities and why are they so important?
3. Love is considered the ultimate feeling. Yet it has been said that love is painful. List five things about love that make it painful.



4. Would you recommend to a friend that he/she rely more on his/her head or heart when selecting a suitable marriage partner? Why?

5. Noted psychologist, M. Scott Peck suggests romance is nature's way of fooling us into getting married because no one in their right mind, who could foresee what was to come would ever do it. Why do you suppose he feels this way?

6. Valentine's Day is an opportunity for partners to express their love. Gifts are almost expected on this holiday. Would you rather receive a gift from your partner on a special occasion or as a surprise? Why?

7. List the ingredients or write the formula for the perfectly loveable person.

Psychology  
Self-esteem

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:**

Our self-esteem is our own estimation of our self-worth. It is how much you value yourself independent of what others think of you. Unfortunately, many teenagers emphasize how they are perceived by others during adolescence rather than how they feel about themselves. This approach causes much confusion and reduces rather than enhances self-esteem. In order to feel good about yourself and reach your goals, it is extremely important to have high self-esteem.

**Directions:**

Answer the following questions on self-esteem within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. List four advantages of having high self-esteem.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Some people have accomplished a great deal but, strangely enough, have low self-esteem. On the other hand, there are those that have high self-esteem yet have very few accomplishments. Why do you suppose this happens?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Most high school students seem to rely heavily on their appearance and clothing for their self-confidence or self-esteem. Obviously, our physical attractiveness will diminish as we age. What are some other factors or activities to engage in to derive self-confidence which would be more lasting or appropriate?

4. All of us want to have high self-esteem without being arrogant, conceited, or "stuck up." What is the difference between having high self-esteem and being conceited?

5. In our society, it is impossible to have high self-esteem without great looks, wealth, or great accomplishments. Do you agree? Why?

6. Write a formula or recipe including the ingredients for having high self-esteem.

Psychology  
Appearance And  
Interpersonal Attraction

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction:

All of us have been warned that we "shouldn't judge a book by its cover." Yet many people have a problem in applying these cautions to our personal lives. In our society people spend millions of dollars on diet programs, health spas, cosmetics, hair care, and countless other products to look attractive. From infancy throughout adulthood, ones appearance seems to have a large impact on our own self esteem and our desirability to others.

Directions: Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Since so many people spend so much time and effort to look good, there must be some huge benefits to looking attractive. List five benefits of being physically attractive.
2. It is often been said that physically attractive people tend to be "stuck up" or conceited. Do you agree? Explain.
3. One of your friends is considering having a "rhinoplasty or "nose job" in order to improve her/his appearance. What would be your advice? Why?
4. People tend to match up with others of the opposite sex who have a similar level of physical attractiveness. Occasionally there is a significant difference in the level of attractiveness of the two

people. List three characteristics you might attribute to the one of lesser attraction.

5. It is understandable that people would be attracted to those of the opposite sex that are physically attractive. Research also supports the idea that we prefer to be with those of our own sex that are more attractive. List three possible benefits to having friends of the same sex that are physically attractive.

Psychology  
Communication: Listening

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

One of the qualities that is most beneficial to being a good friend is the ability to listen. Most people have a tendency to try to evaluate, solve, or interpret their friends problems or perspectives on life. Rather than trying to more deeply understand where a friend is coming from, we tend to think about what our response is going to be. Good relationships and friendships are not built from convincing other people that our perceptions are right but by more accurately understanding other people's beliefs. Our responses should include questions that help us more clearly feel exactly as our friend. Once we have this depth, we can express our own viewpoint. The best communication takes place when we listen first. Second, we must have the courage to express our own opinions. Finally, we appreciate any differences of opinion.

### Directions:

Below are some responses to statements made by a friend. Within a group, write a (+) by those responses that show understanding and a (-) by those that show a lack of understanding.

1. I decided to quit the basketball team because the coach wasn't playing me.

- I never used to think that you were a quitter.
- It must have been pretty frustrating to have to sit on the bench so much.
- You should have been patient and waited for your opportunity.
- You won't be able to get a lettermen's jacket now.
- Did you feel like you were being treated unfairly?

2. I decided to quit seeing John.

- Are you crazy! He was a stud!
- Are you upset about it?

\_\_\_You'll never find any one like him again!

3. My pregnancy test came back and I am pregnant!

\_\_\_If I were you, I'd get an abortion.

\_\_\_Why didn't you use a condom?

\_\_\_What kind of thoughts are you having about it?

Directions II:

Read the following dialogue below, putting a (+) where understanding is shown and a (-) where it is lacking.

Bill: I think I want to give up my scholarship to Stanford to pursue acting right now.

Janet: What makes you think that you want to do that?\_\_\_\_\_

Bill: I'm just so tired of taking classes that don't interest me. Besides, a lot of great actors never even finished high school.

Janet: It sounds like you are bored with a lot of classes that you've had to take.\_\_\_\_\_

Bill: Yeah, all these required classes are so boring. I like my drama and speech classes but when am I ever going to use trigonometry?

Janet: Do you think required classes at Stanford will be boring, too?\_\_\_\_\_

Bill: I'm not sure. I hear that classes in college are a lot different.

Janet: Yeah, I hear they don't have so much busy work and they only take about 2 tests per class.\_\_\_\_\_

Bill: No kidding! That sounds better already.

Janet: Have you talked to your parents?\_\_\_\_\_

Bill: Are you nuts! They would never understand this. But, you know what? I think I will go to Stanford. I can major in drama and those other classes don't sound so bad. Thanks for helping me out.

Janet: I just listened. \_\_\_\_\_

### Directions III:

Construct two conversations with your partner. Both conversations involve a difference of opinion on giving money to panhandlers. In the first conversation show the principle of listening for understanding. In the second conversation show each person trying to prove their own point of view.

### Conclusions:

1. Some psychologists believe that we seek out friends that agree with our beliefs and avoid people that don't. Listening for understanding suggests that we should strive to appreciate our differences with others. Which type of friendships do you prefer and why?
2. How would relationships and communication change if more people responded with understanding rather than judgement?



Psychology  
Communication: Sharing Feelings

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction:

Our society has seen remarkable progress for women in the past few decades. Career opportunities and increased participation and excellence in athletics are just a few of many areas where women's lives have improved. One area where women have always been ahead of men has been in the area of communication. Women much more easily share their feelings than men which makes the quality of their friendships better. Do men need to "catch up" with women or do women need to accept that men are "just different?" We will investigate this in the questions below.

Directions:

1. According to many psychologists, women have better quality friendships than men? Do you feel that women's friendships are better or just different? Explain.
2. Most males talk about superficial matters with their friends. Their priority is doing something together like shooting pool or playing golf. Females, on the other hand, are able to just sit and talk, revealing their feelings. List 3 reasons why males don't seem to talk about feelings or problems that they have.
3. Some people believe men do not reveal their feelings much because most women do not want to be around a male that is too emotional. It is not unusual to see a woman crying after a sad movie. However, it is rare to see a man crying. What would your reaction be if you saw a male crying after a sad movie? Explain.

4. Some of the advantages to getting your feelings out are that frustration does not build up inside, friendships are closer, and you live a longer life.(A man's average life span is 70 years compared to 77 years for women.) With all these advantages to sharing feelings, do you feel that men will eventually evolve into this type of communication? Explain.

5. There is some research that suggests that, while women resolve problems by having a good friend listen to them, men solve their problems by going off by themselves until they work out a solution. If this is true, do you feel women should just leave men alone at these times or try to get them to talk about their problem? Explain.

6. There is some research that indicates that men, in fact, share their feelings in certain types of settings. While women can just sit and talk, men need to be doing something and the conversation turns to feelings eventually. If men are shooting pool or shooting baskets, they are much more likely to share feelings than if they are having a cup of coffee with some one. Do you agree? Explain.

7. At one time there was a stigma attached to going to a psychologist. Today it is socially acceptable to go to a psychologist to deal with your problems. Would you prefer discussing your problems with a good friend or a psychologist? Why?

Psychology  
Friendship

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

If we are lucky, most of us will have a few very close friends in which we can share our deepest feelings. Although people like to think they have a number of friends, it is more likely that many of the so-called "friends" are merely acquaintances. What constitutes a good friend and what are the most important qualities we look for? We will examine these concerns in the questions below.

### Directions:

Answer the questions below within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Rank the qualities of a friend listed below in terms of most important to least important. (Add your own, if necessary.)

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| ___sense of humor      | ___intelligent                          |
| ___good listener       | ___similar opinions on important issues |
| ___similar interests   | ___(other)                              |
| ___trust with a secret | ___(other)                              |
| ___dependable          | ___(other)                              |
| ___has a car           |   |

2. According to psychologist G. C. Homans, the people that offer the most benefits to others that expect very little in return are the best liked. Do you think high school students would like people like this or just take advantage of them? Why?

3. Although there are many benefits to having good friendships, there are also costs or things that you have to put up with in friends. List 5 things that "bug" you about your friends.

4. If you were going to confide something very personal to a friend, would it more likely be some one of the same sex or the opposite sex? Why?

5. If you had to make a choice between having a friend who was extremely funny or one who was very kind and generous which would you choose? Why?

6. Studies have shown that we can learn much from people who have differing opinions than ourselves but most tend to prefer friends with similar opinions on important matters. Do you seek out friends with similar or differing opinions than your own? Why?

7. You are stuck on a deserted island. You have a choice between having your best friend with you or some one of the opposite sex that you have never met but find very attractive. Which one would you choose to be with you? Why?

Psychology  
Humor and Attraction

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction:

One of the primary characteristics people look for in friendships and relationships is a sense of humor. People are attracted to those that can make them laugh. Billy Crystal, Eddie Murphy, Gary Shandling, Paul Rodriguez, Whoopi Goldberg, Bill Cosby, and Jerry Seinfeld are just a few of the contemporary comedians who are making a tremendous income because of our need to laugh. Psychology research has shown that there are numerous benefits for those that enjoy laughter.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

1. List as many reasons as you can for why we like to be around funny people.
2. Name 5 comedians that your group agrees are outstanding comedians. What are the similarities and differences of the comedians?
3. Some comedians like Billy Crystal and Bill Cosby have a very spontaneous humor. They are able to respond in humorous ways to the comments of other people. Some people in our own lives have a talent for this. Do you enjoy spontaneous humor or joketelling better? Why?

4. Some of the great comedians from earlier generations relied on visual humor as much if not more than joketelling or spontaneous comments. Laurel and Hardy, Buster Keaton, and Red Skelton are just a few of the greats who relied heavily on sight gags. List 5 examples of very funny visual forms of comedy that you have seen in movies or in your own lives.

5. People enjoy funny people but most people do not like it when others are "too silly." What is the difference between being funny and too silly?

6. What types of humor do you find offensive or in poor taste?

7. Who are the funniest students at the school? What specifically makes each person so funny? Which one would be most likely to be a professional comedian?

Psychology  
Home Environment: Raising Children

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:**

There is much controversy today over the raising of children and the type of discipline that should be used. In today's society, where two parent incomes are commonplace, child rearing has become increasingly difficult. Experts claim that the most well developed children come from parents who are loving but also authoritarian. There is some disagreement on how authoritative parents should be.

**Directions:**

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

1. Experts believe that concerned authoritarian parents, ones that tell you what to do but in a loving way, develop better children than parents that are concerned and permissive. (Parents that are loving but allow you to make your choices on important matters.) Do you agree with the experts? Explain.
2. Due to concern about child abuse and the values that we teach our children, many people believe that children should not be spanked. Do you agree? Explain.
3. List 5 types of discipline that your group feels are effective.
4. Research has indicated that using reinforcement is more effective

than using punishment in shaping behavior. Do you think that rewards like money for good grades or a car for graduation are beneficial incentives for young people? Explain.

5. It has been said that teachers cannot do a quality job of teaching unless parents have taught their children "respect for authority." More and more parents seem to be teaching their children to challenge authority instead of respect it. Why do you suppose parents are doing this? Do you think these parents are right? Explain.

6. As a teenager, what secret advice would you share with adults that would make them better parents?

7. Construct the ideal parents. What types of reinforcement will they use? What types of punishment? Would you prefer that they be strict or flexible with the rules? Why?



Psychology  
Pleasure and Happiness

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:**

There are certainly numerous ways that people seek pleasure, joy, and happiness in their lives. Travel, recreation, sport, music, friendship, and service to others are just a few of the many ways that Americans spend their leisure. Some people believe that happiness cannot be pursued. It is actually a by-product of making valuable contributions to society and to others.

**Directions:**

Within a group rank the following activities in order of which ones would provide the most happiness. Then provide explanations as to why you ranked the activity high or low.

**Activities**

**Explanation**

1. \_\_\_Watching your favorite T.V. show
2. \_\_\_Getting an A in your most difficult class
3. \_\_\_Walking on the beach and holding hands with a boyfriend or girlfriend
4. \_\_\_Vacationing in Hawaii
5. \_\_\_Helping a friend move
6. \_\_\_Teaching a young child to throw a ball
7. \_\_\_Playing softball/basketball/volleyball with a group of friends
8. \_\_\_Receiving a brand new sports car from your parents for graduation

9. \_\_Buying a brand new sports car from the money you have saved for 3 years
10. \_\_Coming in first place in a competition
11. \_\_Donating time for the "Special Olympics" for handicapped youngsters
12. \_\_Planning a trip with a friend to the French Riviera
13. \_\_Serving homeless people Thanksgiving dinners
14. \_\_Being told by a friend you are the most considerate person
15. \_\_Being told by a teacher you are brilliant and hard working
16. \_\_Making suggestions to a friend brings her/him out of a depression
17. \_\_Watching your favorite singing group in concert
18. \_\_Developing a solution to a problem in society (cure cancer, for example)
19. \_\_Riding a bike with a friend
20. \_\_Hugging your boyfriend or girlfriend
21. \_\_Receiving an academic or athletic scholarship to your favorite university

**Interpretations:**

The previous fun activities fall into categories of personal achievement, friendship, recreation, relaxation, or contributions to society. List the numbers of the activities under the appropriate categories below.

Personal Achievement	Friendship	Recreation	Relaxation	Valuable Contribution
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Conclusions:**

1. Referring to the categories in Interpretations, which category do you feel provides the most joy and happiness to people? Why?
2. It's been said that all work and no play makes you a dull person. What would all play and no work make a person? Why?
3. Write a formula showing the ingredients of a life filled with happiness.

Psychology  
 Defense Mechanisms:  
 Dealing With Frustration

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Period \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

It is quite natural for people to develop coping skills to protect their self-esteem. When we fail to achieve a desired goal, it certainly can be very frustrating. However, there are desirable and undesirable manners in which to cope with these frustrations. All of us, at times, have used some of the undesirable ways of coping. Most of them fall within the category of defense mechanisms. Generally speaking, defense mechanisms allow us to blame other people, situations, and temporarily help us feel better. However, they are not very productive to our personal growth.

### Directions:

The following story is a fictional account of a high school aged young man going through a difficult Monday. Within a group, you are going to locate the defense mechanisms that are used throughout the story. Write the type of defense mechanism that is being exhibited on the lines provided. You may use the selection below more than once.

### Defense Mechanisms:

procrastination	displaced aggression
projection	compensation
sweet lemons rationalization	overcompensation
sour grapes rationalization	cognitive dissonance
regression	approach-approach conflict
repression	avoidance-avoidance conflict
rationalization	approach-avoidance conflict
identification	

### The Story:

"John, get up! You'll be late for school," yelled Mrs. Smith.

"Gee mom, I can sleep at least fifteen minutes more," replied Johnny." 1. \_\_\_\_\_

John knew he had to give a speech today in his first period class and was hoping his mother would forget to wake him up. Finally, John pulls himself out of bed, contemplates cutting his first period class and driving down to the beach. Mumbling to himself he decides, "I might as well get it out of the way." 2. \_\_\_\_\_

As John makes his way to the bathroom he reminisces about how great it was when he was four years old and didn't have to go to school. 3. \_\_\_\_\_ While blow drying his hair he finds he can't quite get the hair on the back of his head to lay down. He throws his brush into the bathtub, and heads to the kitchen for breakfast. 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Johnny always has two bowls of Wheaties before leaving for school. He is a great fan of Michael Jordan, the basketball star, who is famous for eating his Wheaties daily. 5. \_\_\_\_\_ While eating his breakfast, he turns to the sports page and notices that the Dodgers beat the Braves yesterday. Johnny looks to his mother, who is from Atlanta, and says, "Mom, my Dodgers whipped your Braves again. That makes three in a row." 6. \_\_\_\_\_

The youngster has actually wanted to be a football player. However, he is only 5'-3" and realizes that there is not much of a future for him in that area. Instead he is running long distance races for the varsity and doing quite well. 7. \_\_\_\_\_

John's mother notices that he is still reading the newspaper and says, "Johnny, you know what Mr. Martinez said, if you're late one more time, you'll be dropped from first period.:" 8. \_\_\_\_\_

Johnny replies, "Ah mom," and gathers his books to go to school in his 1965 Mustang. On his way to school he always picks up Robert Jones, a teammate who also runs in the long distance races. As Johnny pulls out of his driveway the car stalls.

Robert asks, "Johnny, why don't you get a new car?"

Johnny replies, "Oh, I really like '65 Mustangs. Besides, some day they'll be antiques and then I'll be able to get a lot of money for it." 9. \_\_\_\_\_

In his first period class Mrs. Scott decides to choose Johnny to give his speech first. Johnny replies, "Mrs. Scott, I couldn't prepare for it because my dad made me help him work on the car last night." 10. \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. Scott gave Johnny a zero for a speech but everything went well for him the rest of the morning. During lunch Johnny always takes some of his teammates to McDonald's burgers. John had been wondering if he should go to the Boyz II Men concert at the Forum or

to see Eddie Murphy at the Roxy on Friday. 11. \_\_\_\_\_

"Hey Johnny, are you going to see Boyz II Men or Eddie Murphy this Friday?" asked Stephen Smith.

"I decided to go see Eddie Murphy. I can sit much closer to the stage and it's cheaper to see Murphy. Boyz II Men aren't playing their old songs on this tour. Besides that the Forum has terrible acoustics." 12. \_\_\_\_\_

All day Johnny had been wondering if he should take Diane Lyons to the prom. At nine-thirty he finally decides to call. 13. \_\_\_\_\_

"Hi is Diane there?"

"Yeah, this is Diane," she replied.

"Hey, how's it goin'? This is Johnny."

"Johnny who?"

"You know, Johnny Ryan."

"Oh yeah, hey, I didn't recognize your voice. How are you?"

"Pretty good," Johnny replied. "How'd you like to go to the prom with me?"

"Oh, I'd love to but I can't. I'm already going with George Jackson." 14. \_\_\_\_\_

"O.K. Well, maybe some other time."

"Yeah, I'll see you at school tomorrow."

Johnny, thinking out loud, says, "I didn't want to go anyways. It costs too much money and I hate big parties." 15. \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER'S COPY  
ANSWERS FOR DEFENSE MECHANISMS:  
DEALING WITH FRUSTRATION**

1. Procrastination
2. Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict
3. Regression
4. Displaced Aggression
5. Identification
6. Identification
7. Compensation
8. Procrastination
9. Sweet Lemons Rationalization
10. Rationalization
11. Approach-Approach Conflict
12. Cognitive Dissonance
13. Procrastination or Approach-Avoidance Conflict
14. Approach-Approach Conflict
15. Sour Grapes Rationalization