Activity A: The Müller-Lyer Illusion

Work Station Site
Look at the panels that are set up for you.

Closely examine the first pair of figures on the panel.

*Slowly slide the handle on the second figure (right hand side), until the lengths of the horizontal lines of both figures are equal.*

*Use the rope provided to check the lengths of both lines.*

1. What do you notice?

This is referred to as the Müller-Lyer Illusion. One of the explanations for how this illusion works relies on the idea that we see similar ‘patterns’ around us. For example, our experience of viewing external corners of buildings or internal walls may influence our perception of length.

*Test this idea by looking at the superimposed lines on the photographs.*

2. Explain in your own words the possible cause of the Müller-Lyer Illusion.
Testing the explanation

Three more pairs of figures have been provided to test the explanation of the Müller-Lyer Illusion. The ‘ends’ of each pair of shapes have been changed.

3. Would you expect the changed ends to make a difference? Explain.

*Together with your partner, test each pair of figures.*

4. Do your observations match your predictions? Explain your findings.

Extension

To extend this investigation, you may wish to draw your own modifications of the original illusion figures.
Activity B: Gestalt Principles

Work Station Site

Examine the illustrations provided. Find the images that illustrate the Gestalt Principles at work.

1. Sketch the images you selected, in the appropriate spaces in the table below. Select at least one image for each category and include an explanation of how the selected sample illustrates the Gestalt Principle category at work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Drawing</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure-ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Extension**

Examine the colour-blindness charts in *The Mind: Enter the Labyrinth* exhibition. These are on the outside wall of the Ames Room, near the plasma screen. Explain what you see and how it works. (a drawing may help you)
Activity C: Psychology Timeline

Construct a timeline as you move through the *Mind* exhibition. Include 10 dates/events that you think are important in the field of psychology.

**Activity D: The Ames Room**

**Work Station Site**
Go to the Ames Room in the Mind Gallery.

*Enter the Ames room.*
*Walk slowly from the entry door to the exit door.*

1. What do you notice? List 2 unusual things going on in this room.

   ________________________________
   ________________________________

*Once outside the room, take a look at yourself on the plasma screen on the outside wall.*

2. What do you see?

3. Try to explain what might be causing this.

*Now, ask your partner to walk through the Ames room again while you watch through the peephole (middle box) to the right of the plasma screen. Repeat this, swapping roles with your partner.*

4. What do you notice? Discuss your observations with your partner.

5. Can you suggest an explanation for what you have both observed?

[Link to Museum Website]
Repeat the previous step once more, but this time look at your partner through the small window above the peephole.

6. What do you notice? Discuss your observations with your partner.

7. How many times would your partner have to repeat this before you didn’t see this occurring?

8. Suggest an explanation for what you have both observed.

9. Draw the shape of the room as viewed through the peephole.

10. Draw the shape of the room as viewed through the small window above the peephole.

Enter the Ames room once again. Look at how the walls and the floor are designed.

11. Do a quick sketch of the floor. Describe the shape of the floor.
    Describe the angle (or orientation) of the floor.

12. Do a quick sketch of the entry and exit walls. Describe how the entry and exit walls compare in shape.
13. Describe how the back (left) wall compares to the front (right) wall in terms of shape and angle (or orientation).

Breaking the Ames Room Illusion

14. What is the illusion created in this room?

15. Why is this an illusion?

16. Why does this occur?
Activity E: Human Emotions

Work Station Site
Enter the area behind the Human Emotions wall and watch the video clips.

Complete the table below for the video clips shown on the ‘Human Emotions’ screens.

- For each segment list the emotion it generates in you. For example, does it make you feel anger, sadness, fear, disgust, surprise or happiness?
- Look at each segment closely. What ‘cues’ or ‘triggers’ do you think are used in the clip to evoke this emotion in you? (Hint: consider visual and auditory cues).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Segment</th>
<th>Emotions experienced</th>
<th>Cues used to evoke emotion</th>
<th>List other ‘cues’ from your day to day life that would evoke the same emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laughter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scream</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dogs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vomit/maggots</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crying people</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Activity F: Mirror Pods

Work Station Site
Enter a Mirror Pod and listen to one of the personal stories.

1. Which story did you listen to?

2. Did the person think that their condition was a positive or a negative?

3. Empathy is the ability to see the world from another person’s perspective. Did you feel empathy for the person telling their story?

4. In each case, talking to somebody else was important. Why was this the case in the story that you listened to?
Activity G (a): Our Perception of Mental Illness – An Historical Approach

Work Station Sites
There are a number of work stations relevant to this activity. They include the panels with the following headings:
1. Defining the mind
2. What is normal behaviour?
3. Cupboard or confinement
4. Past treatments for emotional disorders
5. Can our feelings malfunction? How can I reduce stress?
6. Can our ways of knowing malfunction?
7. Eradication of a mental illness
8. Past treatments for thinking disorders
9. Can our ways of thinking malfunction?
10. History of treatments for personality disorders

The numbers on the floor plan correspond with the text panel indicated.

Examine the panels shown.

1. How have people’s perceptions of mental illness changed over time? (Use examples of exhibits from the Mind exhibition as evidence to support your argument).

2. How has the treatment of mental disorders changed over time? (Use examples of exhibits from the Mind exhibition as evidence to support your argument).
**Activity G (b): Mental Illness**

**Work Station Site**
Look at the Confinement Cubicle used in a 'Lunatic Asylum' in Melbourne during the last century.

1. Imagine being placed in the confinement cupboard. How would you feel?

2. Why were people with a mental illness locked up in the past?

3. How is modern treatment of people with psychiatric disorders different?

Activity H: From the Past

Work Station Site
Go to The Human Body exhibition.

Look at:
- the Craniometry pillar – head models in ‘Measuring heads’
- the Phrenology head
- the Palmistry poster.

Throughout recorded history people have grappled with the human mind and tried to explain the differences in personality between individuals. Many of these attempts gave rise to complex explanations that suited the society of the time, yet have persisted into modern times, despite a lack of scientific validity. These are often referred to as pseudo-sciences.

Craniometry pillar

1. Craniometry was based on the measurement and shape of the skull. What did this pseudoscience say about women?

2. What was the reason given for this verdict?

3. What did John Beddoe’s book indicate about the white men designing the test?
Phrenology head

4. The phrenology head is an example of another pseudoscience. Look at the names given by phrenology to the regions of the head and write six in the spaces below:

a  b  c

d  e  f

What does this tell you about the characteristics that were thought to be important when phrenology was popular?

Palmistry poster

5. Palmistry is concerned with both personality and fortune telling. Look at the links that the followers of palmistry believe exist between hand shape and personality.

Are most of the personality traits positive or negative?

How does this help to explain why palmistry is still popular today?