VCE Psychology at Melbourne Museum

## VCE Psychology: Unit 2 Provocations for The Mind Exhibition

# Information for teachers

Each of the unit-linked resources provides themed provocations for student-led enquiry. They do not represent a comprehensive coverage of all of the material relevant to each unit in the galleries, but a selection of those exhibits most relevant.

The Mind exhibition provides a unique first-person perspective through immersive experiences, artworks, and historical psychiatric objects. Keep in mind that it has been designed for general public audiences, and should not be considered as an exhaustive resource with regards to furthering scientific understanding. The gallery instead provides a launch-pad for exploring the themes outlined, and can be an excellent primary resource for collecting video, photographic or audio data in an affective, thought-provoking environment.

Students can share their research with their classmates or other community members through a variety of self-directed modes, for example:

* Video
* Digital book – eg ibook
* Podcast
* Presentation or lecture
* Article – informative, opinion, interview
* Journal

We recommend familiarising yourself with the trail prior to your class excursion. Visiting the galleries before the excursion will also assist you in directing your students. **VIT registered teachers can get into Melbourne Museum free of charge by subscribing to MV teachers:**

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/mv-teachers-network/>

# Student provocations

The unit-by-unit resources can be used in many ways. Students may wish to choose a topic to investigate that relates to a particular area of interest or is linked to another project. Some teachers prefer to allocate the provocations, either distributing them evenly or creating a whole class focus that may form an assessment task. The provocations can be explored individually or in small groups (2-3 students is ideal).

Each resource provides student explorations within The Mind exhibition that covers content relevant from each unit of VCE Psychology:

#### Unit 2

**Area of Study 1 – What influences a person’s perception of the world?**

* Sensation and perception
* Distortions of perception

**Area of Study 2 – How are people influenced to behave in particular ways?**

* Social cognition

# Psychology Unit 2 – Choose **only** **one** or **two** provocations for deep inquiry:

**Area of Study 1**

1. Is seeing believing? The mind gallery features many visual illusions – distortions of reality through changes of perspective and dimension. How do illusions such as the Ames room and the Mueller-Lyger illusions trick your brain? And is this an indication of your brain’s fallibility, or intelligence?
	* Start here: locate the Ames room and Mueller-Lyger illusions (yellow section)
2. Distortions of perception: What happens when the brain’s mechanisms of sensory perception fail? Look at examples such as synaesthesia and colour blindness – what has occurred in the brain in these instances? Do disorders such as these always have a negative impact on the patient?
	* Start here: locate the tests for colour blindness and panel on synaesthesia (yellow section). A first person account of synaesthesia can be located in the being – identity and interactions section. Enter the video pods to experience them.
3. Filling in the gaps: Exploring gestalt principals, how and why does the brain complete a whole image that is actually not there? What other examples of this do you know, and how does how does this affect our perception of the world with perceptual set in mind?
	* Start here: Gestalt principles wall (yellow section). You may find further examples of similar illusions in other locations in the Mind gallery or broader museum.

**Area of Study 2**

1. Gender stereotypes – Locate examples in the Mind gallery or male/female stereotypes. How does a person’s gender impact the way they are perceived? How has this resulted in different social or cultural expectations (including prejudice views and discrimination), particularly in the area of mental health?
	* Start here: Emotions wall (purple section) - images of emotions on male and female faces, and the woman in mourning (dressed in black). Other gender related material around female hysteria, homosexuality and masturbation as a mental disorder may be of interest.
2. Experimental nature: How has experimentation into power, obedience and conformity influenced the treatment of abnormal behaviours historically? Use examples of research and treatments which would be considered unethical today. Why have views changed?
	* Start here: Find historical treatments (straightjacket and isolation chamber are two examples) throughout the gallery. Interesting information on social experiments can be found in the section ‘Being: identity and interaction’
3. Exploring attitudes: Find a display that triggers a strong feeling for you. Do you think everyone would share this experience? What has shaped your attitudes to this stimulus? Consider the tri-component model in exploring your response.
	* Start here: Explore the gallery in your own time and follow your own interest. When you have found an exhibit that provokes a strong feeling, attempt to locate other connected objects for comparison.

