

Visual Perception:

Use of a fishbone diagram to explore the biological, behavioural, cognitive and sociocultural aspects of visual perception

In this activity, students use a graphic organiser (fishbone diagram) to consider visual perception from the four different perspectives used in Units 1 and 2 of VCE Psychology (i.e. biological, behavioural, cognitive and socio-cultural). Teachers may provide a template-copy for students to complete (as in the attached fishbone drawing), draw the template on the whiteboard for students to copy and complete or provide student access to *SmartDraw* (available from <http://www.smartdraw.com/downloads/>) to complete the fishbone diagram.

Students should write the main topic/idea in the middle of the fishbone – in this case ‘visual perception’ has been written into the fishbone diagram provided. On each ‘rib’ of the fish students then write the next major sub-branches of the topic – in this case ‘biological, behavioural, cognitive and socio-cultural’. Emanating from each rib, students then include main points, key contributors, key research approaches etc. for aspects of visual perception which relate to each perspective.

Use of a visual organiser helps students to not only organise their notes but also provides additional visual cues to aid retention and recall of the required information. Teachers may also ask students to assign one colour for each sub-branch e.g. red = biological, blue = behavioural, green = cognitive and yellow = socio-cultural to further assist students in the retention and recall of information.

Teachers may consider using a jigsaw/expert groups or think/pair/share activity where students complete one branch of the fishbone diagram and then pair up with students who have completed other sections of the diagram to complete the overall diagram.

Note: This graphic organiser and activity can be adapted to suit any topic in Psychology which requires students to look at different ways of explaining/comparing alternative viewpoints in Psychology. Other suggested topics for this type of activity include:

- techniques of qualitative and quantitative data collection with the sub-branches being ‘case studies, observational studies, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, rating scales’ OR ‘longitudinal, cross-sectional, twin and adoption studies’
- ethics in Psychology with the sub-branches being ‘confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, informed consent procedures, debriefing’
- Piaget’s four-stage theory of cognitive development
- Erikson’s eight-stage theory of psycho-social development
- Kohlberg’s six-stage theory of moral development
- perspectives in explaining aggression – ethological, biological, psychodynamic and social learning

Related Key Skills

Investigate and inquire scientifically

- work independently and collaboratively as appropriate and within identified research constraints.

Apply psychological understandings

- use research literature to demonstrate how psychological concepts and theories have developed over time;
- process and interpret information, and make connections between psychological concepts and theories;
- apply understandings to both familiar and new contexts.

Communicate psychological information and understandings

- communicate psychological information, ideas and research findings accurately and effectively;
- use communication methods suitable for different audiences and purposes;
- use scientific language, conventions and referencing of information sources appropriate to the medium of communication.

