

Don't Just Stand There

The Bystander Effect and How to Overcome It

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Grade Level	11th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	110 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2-3 periods
Course	Psychology		

Essential Question

What is the bystander effect, and what can we do to prevent it from happening?

Summary

This lesson introduces students to the phenomenon of the bystander effect. They begin by examining situations in which the bystander effect has been known to occur. They also have an opportunity to analyze hypothetical scenarios and determine whether or not they are examples of the phenomenon. Students then read through or act out a fictional scenario in which the bystander effect is occurring, and they identify the different psychological factors that have contributed to it. The lesson ends with a video that shows students how they can become active bystanders if they happen to witness a conflict or crime.

Snapshot

Engage

Students watch a video of a social experiment and draw inferences about the behavior of the bystanders in the video.

Explore

Students analyze hypothetical scenarios to determine if the behavior represented in each is an example of the bystander effect.

Explain

Students summarize a reading and a video about the bystander effect.

Extend

Students identify the concepts related to the bystander effect that are demonstrated in a fictional scenario.

Evaluate

Students watch a video about becoming an active bystander and apply what they have learned to their own lives through a writing exercise.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: Psychology (9th through 12th grade))

PS.7: The student will understand how society and culture influence a person's behavior and mental processes.
PS.7.3: Examine influences on aggression and conflict including the factors associated with the bystander effect as demonstrated in such cases as the Kitty Genovese murder.

Attachments

- Bystander Effect Scenario Script—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.docx
- Bystander Effect Scenario Script—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.pdf
- Bystander Effect Scenario Script—Don't Just Stand There.docx
- Bystander Effect Scenario Script—Don't Just Stand There.pdf
- Bystander Effect Scenario Teacher's Guide—Don't Just Stand There.docx
- Bystander Effect Scenario Teacher's Guide—Don't Just Stand There.pdf
- Bystander Effect or Not Teacher's Guide—Don't Just Stand There.docx
- Bystander Effect or Not Teacher's Guide—Don't Just Stand There.pdf
- H-Chart—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.docx
- H-Chart—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.pdf
- H-Chart—Don't Just Stand There.docx
- H-Chart—Don't Just Stand There.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Don't Just Stand There.pptx
- The Bystander Effect—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.docx
- The Bystander Effect—Don't Just Stand There - Spanish.pdf
- The Bystander Effect—Don't Just Stand There.docx
- The Bystander Effect—Don't Just Stand There.pdf

Materials

- Computers with Internet access
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Bystander Effect or Not Teacher's Guide (attached)
- The Bystander Effect handout (attached; one per student)
- H-Chart handout (attached; one per student)
- Bystander Effect Scenario Script (attached; one per student)
- Bystander Effect Scenario Teacher's Guide (attached)
- Scrap paper
- Pens/pencils
- Pink, orange, green, and blue highlighters (set of four per student)

10 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparing the Lesson

For the Explore activity, you will use our tech tool Google Slides and set it up. Before you begin, select the provided link:

- English version: http://k20.ou.edu/bystander
- Spanish version: http://k20.ou.edu/spanishbystander

This will create a copy of the Google Slides in your My Drive. You will need to share the link with your students. Add your new URL as a link (either in full or as a shorter Bitly link) and/or QR code to **slide 8**. If you need help use our QR Code tech tool to find instructions. We suggest making one copy per class period since students will be editing on the slides during the lesson.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to facilitate this lesson.

Begin the lesson by telling students they are going to watch a short video. Display **slide 3** and explain the I Notice, I Wonder strategy. Have students take out a piece of scrap paper and divide it in half vertically, with the left-hand column labeled "I Notice" and the right-hand column labeled "I Wonder." Let students know that as they watch the video, they should write down anything they notice that intrigues them in the left-hand column and anything that they are wondering about in the right-hand column.

"Little Girl Lost"

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=R5aIpUVAwZs

Display **slide 4** and play the embedded clip for students. Once the clip has finished, give students another minute or so to jot down their observations and questions. Call on a few volunteers to share what they noticed and wondered. If students are struggling to come up with responses, consider asking a few guiding questions, such as: *Why do you think people chose to ignore the child?* and *What do you think you would have done if you'd seen her at the station?*

After students have shared for a couple of minutes, display the definition of bystander effect on **slide 5** and ask students how the video they watched shows the *bystander effect*. If they struggle, explain to students that the scene in the video is an example of the *bystander effect* because the little girls were in trouble and yet no one in the large group of people stopped to help them. Display **slides 6** and **7** and introduce them to the essential question and learning objectives.

20 minutes

Explore

Begin by having students access the link to the **"Bystander Effect or Not?"** Google Slides. Display **slide 8** and explain to students that they will be participating in a Justified List activity.

Arrange your students into six small groups and assign each group a slide number with a case to analyze. Have students type in your shortened URL address or scan your QR code to access the "Bystander Effect or Not?" slides. Once students have accessed the activity and their assigned slide, display **slide 9**. Before they begin the activity, make sure to spend a couple of minutes going over slides 2-4 of **"Bystander Effect or Not?" slides** to review the definition and expectations for the activity.

Inform them that they will be closely examining and discussing their assigned case and that they will be tasked with determining whether or not the case could be labeled as an example of the *bystander effect.* Make sure to emphasize that groups will need to provide justification and evidence on their assigned slide. For example, on slide 4, there is an image of a girl who fell down in the hallway. No one is helping her get up or pick up her books. This depicts an example of bystander effect because someone is in need, and yet no one in the crowd is helping her. Evidence that supports this justification can be seen in how people avert their eyes as they walk by possibly thinking "someone else will help."

Teacher's Note: Optional Resource

If you would rather not have your students access the "Bystander Effect or Not?" slides, you could download the content as a PDF, print off enough copies for group work, and have them fill in the answers by hand.

To download as a PDF follow these instructions:

1. Open your copy of the provided slides (see previous Teacher's Note for help with access).
2. Select the "File."
3. Select "Download."
4. Select "PDF doc" and save to your computer.

As students begin the activity, feel free to move back to slide 5, so that students can consult the definition as they discuss the case. Let students know that they need to choose a speaker who will share their ideas with the class. Give students about 10 minutes for discussion and for entering justification and evidence into the slides.

Have students reconvene as a whole, and as you proceed through the "Bystander Effect or Not?" slides, ask a representative from each group to explain their group's decision to the class and their reasoning behind their decision. With each response given, write the name of the case on the board, and write next to it whether or not it has been determined to be an example of the bystander effect. When everyone has presented, take a moment to reflect on the justified list that your class has created. Ask students if they have learned anything new about the bystander effect after participating in this activity.

Teacher's Note: Possible Student Responses

If you would like to see the answer key as well as examples of responses that may be generated by the student groups, feel free to consult the attached **Bystander Effect or Not Teacher's Guide**.

30 minutes

Explain

Pass out the attached **The Bystander Effect** article and **H-Chart** handouts to each student. Display **slide 10.** Introduce the Paired Texts H-Chart strategy to students by explaining that the left side of the H-Chart will be a summary of a reading and the right side will be a summary of a video. Students will then combine what they have learned from the reading and video to answer the question in the middle of the H-Chart.

Since the article is lengthy, make sure that the students remain in groups. Using the Jigsaw strategy, split the reading among the group members so that each student reads roughly the same amount of text. Afterwards, have groups discuss the portions of text they read and summarize the main points on the left side of their H-Charts. Give students about 10 minutes to read and complete the left side of their charts.

Teacher's Note: Jigsaw

When assigning students parts to read, make sure that each student is reading something different. Consider the students' reading levels as you are dividing the content among group members. Each section of the reading includes a title that summarizes the topic in focus, so this should make it easier to divide the content. For example, you could assign one student the introduction and another the topic of "empathy," etc.

Next, move to **slide 11** and go over the instructions for the right side of the H-Chart handout with students. Play the video on **slide 12** for students. After the video, provide a few minutes for students to add a summary to the right side of the H-Chart.

"The `Bystander Effect"

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=GZgIYGaeWy0

Display **slide 13**. Have students pair up to write a response to the question in the center of the H-Chart: *What is the bystander effect, and how is it caused?* Ask for several volunteers to share what they wrote as a response.

40 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: Bystander Effect Scenario

In the following activity, students will have an opportunity to read through the script of a hypothetical instance of bystander effect that could potentially happen in a classroom like theirs. If time permits and you have students who enjoy acting, it is highly recommended that you facilitate Option 2 and give nine student volunteers a chance to act out this scene in front of their classmates. However, if you are pressed for time, you should at least give students an opportunity to read the script aloud using Option 1 as a class before working on the Categorical Highlighting activity in their small groups. Regardless of whether or not the script is acted out, make sure that you or another student read the stage directions aloud, as this provides important information about the responses of the students and teacher.

Display **slide 14**. Tell the students that they will now have an opportunity to see what an instance of bystander effect might look like in a classroom like theirs. Pass out a copy of the attached **Bystander Effect Scenario Script** to each student. Give students a couple of minutes to silently skim the script. There are two options for facilitating this activity: Option 1 involves reading the scene aloud, while Option 2 involves students volunteering to act it out. Regardless of the manner in which the script is performed, ask the students to think about the following questions prior to beginning: *How would you react if you witnessed this situation in your classroom? If you have witnessed a situation like this, how did you react?* Since this may be an uncomfortable subject for students, they don't have to share their answers, but they should be mindful of these questions while the scene plays out.

Option 1

After students have silently read through the script, call for nine student volunteers to read for the eight student characters and one to read for the stage directions. You will read the lines of "Ms. Jackson" unless a student would rather read as the teacher. Sitting at their desks, have the volunteers read aloud as they are sitting at their desks.

Option 2

After students have silently read through the script, have nine student actor volunteers and one student reading the stage directions practice in the hallway for about five minutes. Make sure to check on them to see if they have any questions about the logistics of the performance. Invite those students who are not acting to assist in setting the stage. The scene will only require eight desks, a laptop, a Smartboard or projection screen, a hat with slips of paper in it, and a JPG image of an error message. Unhide **slide 15** for the "error message" to use as a prop for the Option 2 skit.

Once students have finished reading or performing the scene, have them return to their small groups from earlier. Display **slide 16** and tell the students that they will be completing a Categorical Highlighting activity. Distribute four colors of highlighters per student. We recommend pink, orange, green, and blue, as these will match the key in the attached **Bystander Effect Scenario Teacher's Guide**. If you have different colors available in your classroom, you are welcome to use those instead. Tell the students that they should use a different color to highlight the four different psychological concepts that are demonstrated in the scenario. In the Bystander Effect Scenario Teacher's Guide that you can use for reference as they share their answers, those colors are: pink (diffusion of responsibility), orange (social influence), green (intimidation factor), and blue (empathy). Let students know that they should write in the margins of the script why they chose to highlight each phrase or sentence that demonstrated a concept.

After groups have had about 15 minutes to highlight their scripts, have the class reconvene. Ask a volunteer from each group to share at least one phrase or sentence that their group highlighted and explain why they agreed that it demonstrated a particular concept.

10 minutes

Evaluate

It is important for students to come away from this lesson with an understanding that they will all encounter situations in school and in the future in which the bystander effect will have the potential to occur. It will be crucial for them to recognize that they have the power to help someone who may be in distress.

Display **slide 17**. Tell your students that they will be watching a video that will show them how they can become an "upstander" rather than a "bystander" if they witness a classmate being bullied. Play the embedded video for students.

"The Importance of Upstander Power"

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=JegGjYtstyw

Display **slide 18**. Conclude the lesson by having students complete an Exit Ticket. Have students take out a clean sheet of paper. Then have them write a paragraph in which they answer the following question: *Now that you know about the bystander effect, what will you do differently if you witness someone in trouble?*

You can use these responses and the highlighted scripts to assess your students' understanding of the lesson content.

Resources

- Bitly. (2023, September 14). https://bitly.com/
- Committee for Children. (2018, October 1). The importance of upstander power [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JegGjYtstyw
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Categorical highlighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google Slides. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2335
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I notice, I wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Justified list. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/164
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Paired texts H-chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/132
- K20 Center. (n.d.). QR codes. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2449
- On Demand News. (2014, March 24). Little girl lost: More than 600 people ignore lost child in TV experiment [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5aIpUVAwZs
- Practical Psychology. (2021, February 17). The bystander effect (Examples + experiments). [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZgIYGaeWy0