

# Sample Classroom Demonstrations

By John D. Mayer

## *Introduction*

Here are some classroom demonstrations for selected chapters of the book.

### *Chapter 1: What Is Personality?*

Demonstration 1-1: Where Is Personality? Ask 10 students to come to the front of the class. Say:

When I count down to 1, I want you to do something... don't do it yet, but I want you to point to your "I." That is, I want you to point to where you believe your innermost self is. Okay ready? [Now count down from 3 to 1]

*What Usually Happens:* Most students will point to their eyes or head. One or two students sometimes point to their hearts.

### *Chapter 2: Evaluating Personality Research*

Demonstration 2-1: Demonstrating Predictive Validity

1. First, ask students to take and score the test shown in Table 5-1 (at the end of this document). It measures extraversion – but don't tell the students that yet.
2. As sternly and distantly as you can, and without further explanation (to discourage the introverts), ask 10 students to stand up and "announce their scores" to the class. Urge them to hurry to do this, because there isn't much time. (This further weeds out the introverts). Keep the students standing while you write the 10 scores on the board. Next, ask the 10 students sitting around them for their scores.

*What (Usually) Happens:* The standing students usually score about 1 point higher in extraversion than those sitting.

Demonstration 2-2. To illustrate reliability, make a correlation plot on the board of 20 or so students' odd versus even scores on the test. The correlation represents the reliability of *half* the test. (It must be corrected upward using the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula to represent the full test).

### *Chapter 3: Perspectives On Personality*

Demonstration 3-1. Present a brief case study of an individual of interest to the class. Provide some information about the individual's physical health, internal self-perceptions, social interactions, and group membership. Next, divide the class into groups and assign each group one of the perspectives covered in Chapter 3. Ask them to analyze the individual from that perspective.

### *Chapter 4: Motivation and Emotion in Personality*

Demonstration 4-1.

1. Showing a picture such as one from the TAT, ask students to make up a story using the TAT instructions (How did it begin? What is happening now? How will it end).
2. As you go through the definitions of need for achievement, power, and affiliation, ask students for samples from their stories that might illustrate each need.

*What (usually) happens:* Students often offer stories that have various motives mixed in. By sampling several different stories, good examples of need for achievement versus power, etc., are obtained and the concepts can be clarified.

### *Chapter 5: Interior Selves; Interior Worlds*

Demonstration 5-1.

1. Ask for 5 volunteers who scored high on the test of extraversion given out in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of class (see Demonstration Chapter 2).
2. Ask for 5 volunteers who scored very high on introversion on the same test.
3. Ask both groups to come up and work on opposite ends of the front of the room.
4. Ask them to list 10 things to do to throw a successful party.

*What (usually) happens:* The extraverts come up with a far more lively, fun party. This helps show how mental models of the world are different as a function of personality traits.

## *Chapter 6: Mental Abilities and Skills*

None yet.

## *Chapter 7: The Conscious Self*

None yet.

## *Chapter 8: How the Parts of Personality Fit Together*

None yet.

## *Chapter 9: The Dynamics of Motivated Action*

### Demonstration 9-1.

Induce a sad, then happy, mood in the class. Next, ask them about their motivation while they are in each mood.

## *Chapter 10: The Dynamics of Self-Control*

### Demonstration 10-1.

In this demonstration, I tell the class that I am not going to hypnotize them, but I will demonstrate another phenomenon that involves dissociation called “The Classic Suggestion Effect” I then read a portion of the dissociation-task instructions, which I have updated and otherwise modified from the Stanford Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility. Here are the instructions, (which are based on the copyrighted version by Higard & Hilgard):

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Now please make yourself comfortable in your chair. Clear your lap of books and papers, and make yourself comfortable. I just want you to experience how it feels to respond to suggestions when you are being yourselves. This is not hypnosis, but involves something called the “Classic Suggestion Effect” that I will explain in a little while.

The following is quoted from Shor & Orne (1962, pp. 4-5, 1a. Head Falling).

*If you will now please sit up straight in your chair... close your eyes and relax; continue, however, to sit up straight. That's right. Eyes closed and sit up straight. Please stay in that position with your eyes closed, while at the same time letting yourself relax (allow about 30 seconds to pass). Now just remain in the same position and keep your eyes closed...sitting up straight in your chair...with your eyes closed.*

*In a moment I shall ask you to think of your head falling forward. As you know, thinking of a movement and making a movement are closely related. Soon after you think of your head falling forward you will experience a tendency to make the movement. You will find your head actually falling forward, more and more forward, until your head will fall so far forward that it will hang limply on your neck.*

*Listen carefully to what I say and think of your head falling forward, drooping forward. Think of your head falling forward, falling forward, more and more forward. Your head is falling forward, falling forward, more and more forward. Your head is falling more and more forward, falling more and more forward. Your head is going forward, drooping down, down, limp and relaxed. Your head is drooping, swaying, falling forward, falling forward, falling forward, falling, swaying, drooping, limp, relaxed, forward, forward, falling, falling, falling...Now!*

*That's fine. Now please sit up and open your eyes. That's right. Sit up and open your eyes. [end of quoted material].*

Now, those of you who felt your head droop, raise your hand, so the others can see. Now, you all can see how thinking about a movement produces a tendency to make the movement.

How many of you felt like it was happening (your head was moving) and it was outside of your control? That is the classic suggestion effect – the sense that one is doing something, but it is being controlled by someone else.

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*What Usually Happens:* After doing the above demonstration, I say, “Now, some of you probably experienced the 'classic suggestion effect'. In this effect, the experience of your head drooping felt a little as if it was out of your control. That is, you felt like your head was drooping on its own, or because I said it should. In other words, it was at least a

little out of your control. How many people felt that?" (Usually, in a class of about 60, about 4 or 5 people will raise their hands).

I go on to say: "Mind you, only some are affected. There are vast individual differences in responsiveness to these tasks. For those who felt it, this is another example of how thinking is divided. Of course, *you* moved your head. Part of you had to say, "okay, now, head, I want you to lower yourself slowly". I couldn't do it from here. And yet for some people, there is a substantial sense of the movement being out of their control. It was a subtle sense, probably not too strong.

Of course, this is all without hypnosis. Under hypnosis, the power of these suggestions is stronger. I don't do hypnosis in class because I don't think it is safe or smart to do it with a group. Still, there are some stage hypnotists that will hypnotize a group. Have any of you ever seen this done?

Okay let's talk about hypnosis...

### *Chapter 11: Personality Development in Childhood and Adolescence*

None yet.

### *Chapter 12: Personality Development in Adulthood*

None yet.

## **SECTION BREAK**

<b>Table 5-1: Measurement Demonstration Scale</b>			
<i>Please answer the following questions:</i>	<i>Circle One:</i>	Place Score in Open Area	
1. I prefer taking action to planning.	Agree Disagree		
2. I am mostly quiet when other people are around.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
3. If there is something I want to know, I would rather look it up in a book or on the web than ask someone about it.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
4. I often take the initiative to make new friends.	Agree Disagree		
5. I am a lively person.	Agree Disagree		
6. I am quick and sure in my actions.	Agree Disagree		
7. I like to think things over and take my time before doing anything.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
8. I am happiest working on projects requiring fast action.	Agree Disagree		
9. I find it fairly hard to really enjoy myself at a lively party.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
10. I most often prefer reading to meeting people.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
11. I would be very unhappy if I could not have a lot of friends and people to meet.	Agree Disagree		
12. Other people think of me as very lively.	Agree Disagree		
13. I enjoy doing things in which I have to act quickly.	Agree Disagree		
14. I prefer working on matters that require me to pay close attention to what I am doing.	<u>Agree Disagree</u>		
<p><b>SCORING INSTRUCTIONS:</b></p> <p><b>Part 1</b> Note that there are two types of response scales above: those where “Agree Disagree” is not underlined, and those where “Agree Disagree” is underlined.</p> <p>(A) When “Agree Disagree” is <i>not</i> underlined:  --Put a “1” in the open box to the right for “Agree”  --Put a “0” in the open box to the right for “Disagree.”</p> <p>(B) For those items where “<u>Agree Disagree</u>” is underlined:  --Put a “0” in the open box to the right for “Agree”  --Put a “1” in the open box to the right for “Disagree.”</p> <p><b>Part 2</b></p> <p>(A) Add up your scores on the even items and put it in the labeled box to the right.</p> <p>(B) Do the same for your scores on the odd items</p> <p>(C) Add your “Odd” and “Even” scores to get your total score and enter it to the right.</p>	<b>Enter Your Total Score Below</b>	<b>Enter Your Even-Item Score Below</b>	<b>Enter Your Odd-Item Score Below</b>