

networks

There's More Online!

- ✓ **CARTOON** Social Interaction
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** Importance of Socialization
- ✓ **IMAGE** Infant Socialization
- ✓ **IMAGE** Well-Socialized Children
- ✓ **SELF-CHECK QUIZ**



LESSON 1

The Importance of Socialization

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • *What factors influence an individual's development?*

Reading HELPDESK



Academic Vocabulary

- **transmission**
- **isolation**

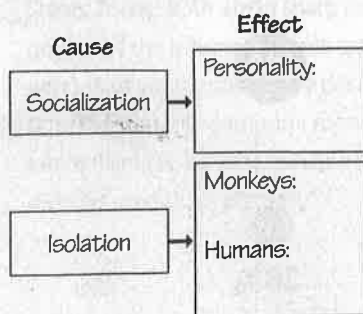
Content Vocabulary

- **socialization**

TAKING NOTES:

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

CAUSE AND EFFECT As you read about the importance of socialization, use a graphic organizer like the one below to record details about the effects of socialization versus isolation.



IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Socialization is the cultural process of learning to participate in group life. Without it, we would not develop many of the characteristics we associate with being human. Studies have shown that animals and human infants who are deprived of intensive and prolonged social contact with others are stunted in their emotional and social growth.

Socialization and Personality

GUIDING QUESTION *Why is socialization important?*

Nearly all the human social behavior we consider natural and normal is learned. It is natural to us in the United States for husbands and wives to walk along side-by-side. In many places in India, however, it seems natural for wives to walk slightly behind their husbands. In fact, nearly all aspects of social life (including walking patterns) are not natural but learned through the process of socialization. Human beings at birth are helpless and without knowledge of their society's ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. If a human infant is to grow and participate in cultural life, much learning has to take place. This is the role of socialization. **Socialization** is the cultural process of learning to participate in group life. Such learning takes place through cultural **transmission**.

Socialization begins at birth and continues throughout life. Successful socialization enables people to fit into all kinds of social groups. Socialization must occur if high school freshmen are to adjust to a new situation, if graduating seniors are to look for employment, and if the president of the United States is to govern successfully.

Psychological case studies point out the importance of socialization early in life. Without prolonged and intensive social contact, children do not learn such basics as walking, talking, and loving. Without socialization, a human infant cannot develop the set of attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors associated with being an individual in society. Without socialization, infants and children cannot develop the capacity for language. Without language, they cannot understand human relationships. Without this understanding, they cannot form bonds.

Researching the Effects of Social Isolation

Suppose you wanted to design an experiment to see how socialization affects infants. You would have to set up an experiment that compared a group of normally socialized infants (the *control* group) with a group of isolated infants—infants with little or no human contact (the *experimental* group). For obvious reasons, such experiments are not conducted with human infants. Such experiments have been done with monkeys, however.

Psychologists Harry Harlow and Margaret Harlow devised a famous set of experiments that showed the negative effects of social **isolation** on rhesus monkeys. In one experiment, the Harlows isolated infant monkeys for different lengths of time before introducing them to group life. They found that monkeys that had been isolated for around three months were able to learn to play and to adjust to group life. The monkeys that had been isolated for six months or more never adjusted to group life and were rejected by the other monkeys. The Harlows reported that infant monkeys raised in isolation became withdrawn, hostile adults. They never exhibited normal sexual patterns. As mothers, they either rejected or ignored their babies. Sometimes, they even physically abused them.

In another experiment, the Harlows separated infant monkeys from their mothers at birth. They then exposed the infants to two artificial mothers. Both artificial mothers were wire dummies of the same approximate size and shape as real adult monkeys. One of the substitute mothers had an exposed wire body. The other was covered with soft terry cloth. Free to choose between them, the infant monkeys consistently spent more time with the soft, warm mother. Even when the exposed wire dummy became the only source of food, the terry cloth mother remained the favorite. Closeness and comfort seemed to be more important to these monkeys than food. When the researchers frightened the monkeys with a mechanical toy bear or a rubber snake, they consistently ran to their cloth mothers for security and protection. This led the Harlows to conclude that infant-mother bonding is not the result of feeding. Rather, it is the result of close physical contact, what in humans we would call *cuddling*.

Generalizing from Monkeys to Humans

Rhesus monkeys are not humans. Thus scientists are careful when drawing conclusions about human behavior from animal studies. Yet many experts on human development believe that—like the rhesus monkeys in the Harlows' experiments—human infants have emotional needs for affection, intimacy, and warmth that are as important as their physiological needs for food, water, and protection. Contact and communication appear to be essential to normal human development. Human babies denied close human contact usually have difficulty forming emotional ties with other people. According to classic studies by René Spitz and Lawrence Casler, the developmental growth rate of institutionalized children—who generally receive less physical contact than children raised in family settings—can be improved with only twenty minutes of extra touching a day.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing How does research on the social isolation of rhesus monkeys show the importance of socialization?

socialization the process of learning to participate in a group

transmission the act or process of conveying information from one person to another

isolation the condition of being set apart from others

The rhesus monkeys in the Harlows' experiment on isolation consistently ran to their terry cloth "mothers" when frightened.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Determining Cause and Effect

Why do you think the monkeys preferred the cloth mother over the wire mother?



Case Studies on Isolated Children: Anna, Isabelle, and Genie

GUIDING QUESTION *How can a lack of socialization affect children?*

To understand more about how socialization affects development, we will look at the case histories of three children—Anna, Isabelle, and Genie—who were socially and emotionally abused. Anna, Isabelle, and Genie had traumatic childhoods. Although these children were born many years ago, similar situations still occur today, unfortunately.

Anna

Anna was found tied to a small chair in a second-floor storage room on a farm in Pennsylvania in 1938. According to an article in the *New York Times* published at the time of her discovery, the chair was tilted back, and Anna's arms were tied above her head.

Anna was born on March 6, 1932, the second child born to her unmarried mother. For the first six to ten months of her life, Anna lived at a children's home or in the care of a practical nurse. Those who cared for her then said that she seemed to be a normal baby. Then, when outside agencies refused to pay for her care, Anna was returned to her mother's home. Anna's mother feared that the sight of the child would anger her father, so she kept Anna confined to a small upstairs room in the family farmhouse. For five years, Anna received only milk to drink. When finally found, she was barely alive. Her legs were skeleton-like, and her stomach was bloated from malnutrition. Apparently, Anna had seldom been moved from one position to another, and her clothes and bedding were filthy. She did not know what it was like to be held or comforted. At the time of her discovery, Anna could not walk or talk and showed few signs of intelligence.

Sociologist Kingsley Davis visited Anna soon after her discovery. He noted that three days after arriving at the county home where she was being cared for,

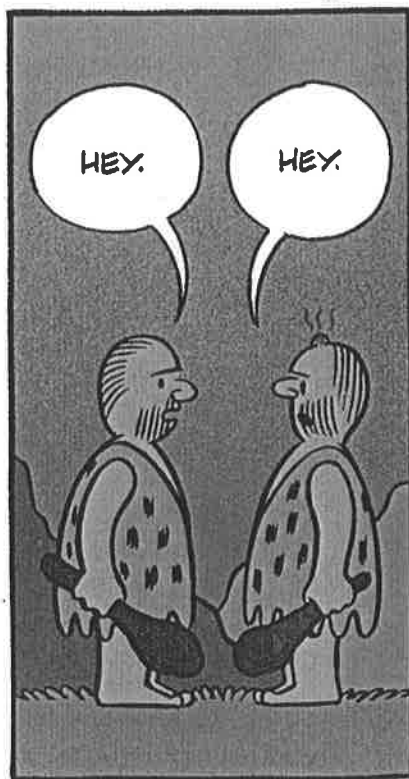
CARTOON

SOCIAL INTERACTION

We learn to participate in group life through interaction with others.

► CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Analyzing** Prior to their conversation, how do you think the two "cavemen" were interacting?
- 2. Drawing Conclusions** How does this cartoon illustrate the importance of language in human relationships?



Anna begin to show slight improvement. When she first arrived, she had lain motionless and expressionless. By the time Davis saw her on the third day, Anna could sit up if she was placed in a sitting position, and she could move her arms, legs, and head. Davis attributed these changes to the fact that Anna had been given attention, a high-vitamin diet, and massages. She liked food, but she could not chew solid food or drink from a cup. She had to be fed with a spoon or a bottle. Although she did not cry or smile, she lost her temper when people tried to restrain her. When Davis returned ten days after his first visit, he noted some additional progress. For example, she had begun to smile and handle her toys.

During the first year and a half after being found, Anna continued to live at the county home for children. She learned to walk, to understand simple commands, and to feed herself. She could recall people she had seen. But her speech was that of a one-year-old.

Anna was then transferred to a school for learning disabled children where she made further progress. Still, at the age of seven, her mental age was only nineteen months, and her social maturity was that of a two-year-old. A year later, she could bounce and catch a ball, participate as a follower in group activities, eat normally (although with a spoon only), attend to her toilet needs, and dress herself (except for handling buttons and snaps). At this point, she had acquired the speech level of a two-year-old. By the time of her death at age ten, she had made additional progress. She could carry out instructions, identify a few colors, build with blocks, wash her hands, brush her teeth, and try to help other children. Her developing capacity for emotional attachment was reflected in the love she had developed for a doll.

Isabelle

Nine months after Anna was found, Isabelle was discovered in Ohio. Kingsley Davis reported on Isabelle's case, too. Isabelle, like Anna, had been hidden away because her mother was unmarried. Isabelle's mother had been deaf since the age of two and did not speak. She stayed with her child in a dark room, secluded from the rest of the family. Isabelle's mother eventually escaped from her parents' house and took Isabelle with her. When Ohio authorities found them, Isabelle was six. She was physically ill from an inadequate diet and lack of sunshine. Her legs were so bowed that when she stood the soles of her shoes rested against each other, and her walk was a skittering movement. Some of her actions were like those of a six-month-old infant. Unable to talk except for a strange croaking sound, Isabelle communicated with her mother by means of gestures. Like an animal in the wild, she reacted with fear and hostility to strangers, especially men.

At first, Isabelle was thought to be severely learning disabled. Her initial IQ score was near the zero point. Nevertheless, an intensive program of rehabilitation was begun. After a slow start, Isabelle progressed through the usual stages of learning and development at a faster pace than normal. Within a few months she was speaking in complete sentences. Less than a year later, she could identify words and sentences. It took her only two years to acquire the skills mastered by a normal six-year-old. By the time she was eight and a half, Isabelle was on an educational par with children her age. By outward appearances, she was an intelligent, happy, energetic child. At age fourteen, she participated in all the school activities normal for other children in her grade.



Social interaction is critical to a child's emotional growth.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Making Connections How does playing with others help a child develop?



Studies have shown that children raised under extremely isolated conditions have little or no chance of ever being socialized.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Interpreting Significance How does the case of Genie support the theory that the effects of prolonged isolation are difficult to overcome?

To Isabelle's good fortune, she, unlike Anna, benefited from intensive instruction at the hands of trained professionals. Her ability to progress may also have been because she was confined with her mother for company and comforting.

Genie

Isabelle was the exception not the rule. Genie's fate was more typical. Genie was found in 1970 in California, when she was 14 years old. From the time she was nearly two, Genie's father had kept her in a locked room, believing that she was mentally disabled. She was tied to a potty chair and forced to sit alone with no one to talk to and little to look at.

When Genie was discovered, she weighed only 59 pounds. Her mental capacity was that of a one-year-old. Much of her behavior was subhuman. Because Genie's father severely punished her for making any sounds, she never sobbed when she cried or spoke when angry. Because her father never gave her solid food, she could not chew. Her social behavior was primitive. She had a strange bunny walk, and she sniffled, clawed, and spat. If another person had something she liked, she would take it without asking.

A team of doctors and rehabilitation specialists studied Genie and worked to help her overcome the effects of isolation. They tested her brain waves and found they were abnormal. They worked to teach her to speak. Speech was a special interest of some of the researchers. Linguists had put forth the theory that language is more than simply learned behavior. Some argued that there was a window within which people needed to learn to speak and if language was not achieved by puberty, it might not be attainable. A year into therapy, Genie had learned some words and phrases, but her language ability resembled that of an 18-month-old. Although she made further progress, she never achieved complete language ability.

Implications

The implication of the cases of Anna, Isabelle, and Genie is unmistakable. The personal and social development associated with being human is acquired through intensive and prolonged social contact with others.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Comparing and Contrasting How were the cases of Anna, Isabelle, and Genie similar and different?

LESSON 1 REVIEW



Reviewing Vocabulary

- 1. Summarizing** Why does socialization continue throughout life?
- 2. Explaining** In what ways is socialization the opposite of isolation?

Using Your Notes

- 3. Describing** Use your notes to describe the effects of a lack of socialization on Anna, Isabelle, and Genie.

Answering the Guiding Questions

- 4. Assessing** Why is socialization important?
- 5. Evaluating** How can a lack of socialization affect children?

Writing Activity

- 6. Argument** Do you think sociologists have overemphasized the importance of human contact in an individual's development? Briefly describe the sociological view. Then take a stand for or against the view. Provide reasons for your stand.