

Directions: Highlight the answer/evidence for each question.

Name: _____ Class: _____

What is conformity? **Conformity**

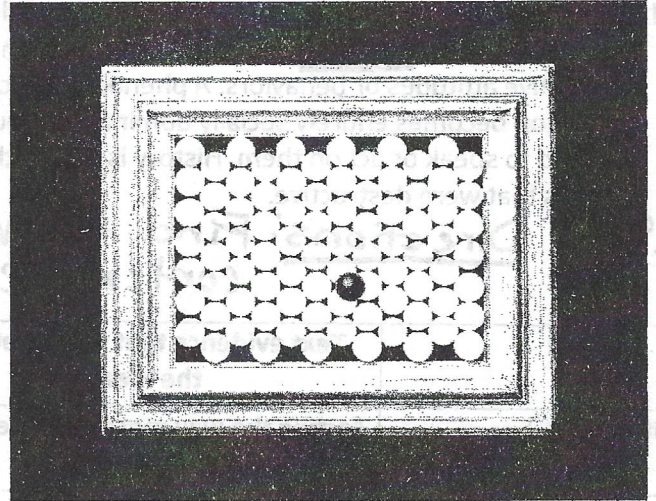
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What are norms?

Conformity is the act of matching one's beliefs or actions to the norms of a larger social group. Norms are the usually unspoken rules that govern the attitudes and behavior of a group of people. As you read, take notes on the different types of conformity and what motivates people to conform.

Why do people conform?

[1] Conformity, or acting the way most other people in one's social group act, often grows out of a person's desire for security and belonging in a group - usually a group of similar age, culture, religion, or educational background. Acting differently from the group carries the risk of social rejection, a deep fear that many people have. The drive to conform is often particularly powerful for adolescents, for whom acceptance by peers can be a primary goal, but it also affects people of all ages. Some studies suggest that conformity decreases with age.



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How can conformity be good?

Although the word often has a negative connotation,¹ conformity is not necessarily a bad thing. The tendency of people to conform helps society to function smoothly in many ways. Following rules for driving, for example, enables safe transportation. The tendency of people to follow norms of interpersonal interaction enables effective communication and collaboration.

What are the 3 different types of conformity?

Psychologist Herbert Kelman identified and labeled three major types of conformity. The first, compliance, occurs when a person conforms publicly, but privately keeps his or her own original beliefs. People comply because of a need for approval from others and fear of rejection. The second, identification, is conforming to a particular person who is well liked and respected, such as a friend or a family member. Identification is usually motivated by the perceived role model's attractiveness or success. Internalization is when people have actually internalized a group's belief system and see it as truly their own, both publicly and privately. This is the most profound form of conformity and is likely to stay with people for a long time.

Type of Conformity	Your Example:
①	①
②	②
③	③

1. **Connotation (noun):** an idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal or primary meaning

How did Sherif's experiment demonstrate conformity? ↓



The strong force of conformity is well documented in psychological research. A researcher named Muzafer Sherif, for example, wanted to know how many people would change their opinions about something because of the desire to conform to a larger group. He conducted an experiment in which people were positioned in a dark room and asked to stare at a small dot of light 15 feet away. They were then asked to guess the amount by which the light moved (the dot actually was not moving at all). On the first day, each person saw different degrees of movement; but from the second to the fourth day, the same estimate was agreed on and the members of the group conformed their opinions to this estimate. Sherif believed this experiment demonstrated the way a norm develops in a society, and how people tend to fit their personal beliefs to that norm. Few people desire to be an "outlier" whose opinion differs widely from what is typical in the group.

How is conformity bad? ↓

[5] The "dark side" of conformity has often been explored as well. The need to be accepted and the fear of punishment for deviating² from group norms can in many cases impel³ people to unthinkingly adopt negative attitudes or behaviors. A phenomenon called the "spiral of silence" can occur when one opinion becomes entirely socially dominant because those people who have different opinions are afraid to speak or act on them. History is rife⁴ with examples of mass conformity to group norms and ideas that were destructive.

RI.9.4 Directions: Find the word in the text and use context clues to determine the meaning.

Word	Text evidence that helps determine the meaning	Your definition
Conformity	"acting the way most other people in one's social group act"	-being the same as others -not unique
Compliance		
Internalization		
Outlier		
Deviating		
Impel		
Rife		

RI.9.2 Summarize Muzafer Sherif's experiment in your own words.

2. **Deviate (verb)**: to depart from an established course or norm
3. **Impel (verb)**: to drive, force, or urge (someone) to do something
4. **Rife (adjective)**: prevalent, especially to an increasing degree