

Being Bullied

ARE YOU A BULLY?—Researchers at Compass Academy have been asking this question for the last eight months, and according to a recent experiment they believe they have found the answer. Experiments show that one's propensity for being a bully is probably not the product of one's personality or background. Bullying may be a natural response to specific situations, hard-wired into the human brain.



Given the right **environmental** conditions, **anyone**, even the most **easygoing** person, can quickly turn mean.

To arrive at this conclusion, researchers examined thirty sample populations, or "teams," consisting of twenty individuals each. In each of these teams, a leader was selected. Not just any leader would do. The population of **leaders** selected had to be very diverse; the researchers did not want their results to be skewed because all team leaders were white males aged 15–18, for example. Therefore, leaders were selected so to represent a variety of traits. Each leader had a different age and gender, as well as different economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds.

After the teams had been established, researchers began the experiment. The teams were given a goal of forming a line from shortest to tallest, using every person on the team. Sounds pretty simple, right? But there was a catch: the leader was the only one allowed to move team members into position. Absolute power was given solely to the team leader, and team members had to **obey** him or her no **matter** what. What is more, in order to incentivize the teams, they were told that a \$2000 prize was to be awarded to the team that managed to form a perfect line in the **least amount** of time.

Given the relatively large team size, there was almost always a case in which the leader had to make a tough decision **regarding** who was taller. And, upon the decision, there was likely disagreement on **behalf** of the team members. Given that a \$2000 payoff was at stake, things often became rather heated. In the shuffle, it was not uncommon to hear team members **utter** such criticisms as, "Great, we're never going to win now," and "Who picked our team leader?" Researchers found that in **roughly** 80% of all cases in which such remarks were made, the team leader immediately entered bully mode, disparaging **ornery** team members with remarks such as "Shut up," and "Just do what I say and keep your mouth shut, okay?" In one such occasion, the team leader was recorded saying, "There's a reason I'm the boss here, buddy," when in actuality, there wasn't. In a particularly tense exchange, the team leader was overheard asking the team member if he "wanted to get hurt"—a classic bullying tactic—and researchers were forced to intervene. **Unsurprisingly**, this group did not win the prize.

What are we to glean from such a study? The belief that some people are born bullies is certainly shaken; it seems anyone can be a bully, no matter his or her background. So the next time you **feel** the bully within **yearning** to come out, don't let it. If you see someone else being a bully, don't judge him or her so quickly. **Instead**, realize that their bullying **behavior** doesn't just come from within. Rather, one study shows that it may very well come from without.

Based on its use in paragraph 1, it can be inferred that the word propensity belongs to which of the following word groups?

- a. inclination, proclivity, tendency
 - b. decision, action, affirmation
 - c. ability, aptitude, capacity
 - d. tug, gravity, pull
2. Based on information in the passage, it can be understood that something that is "hard-wired" into the brain is
- a. attached to the brain via physical wires
 - b. a result of one's environment
 - c. a product of the imagination
 - d. an inborn trait
3. Which of the following sentences from the passage best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
- a. "Researchers at Compass Academy have been asking this question for the last eight months, and according to a recent experiment, they believe they have found an answer."
 - b. "Given the right environmental conditions, anyone, even the most easygoing person, can quickly turn mean."
 - c. "One team leader was actually recorded saying, "There's a reason I'm the boss here, buddy" when in actuality, there wasn't."
 - d. "The belief that some people are born bullies is certainly shaken; it seems anyone can be a bully, no matter his or her background."
4. As used in paragraph 4, the word disparaging most nearly means
- a. inflicting physical harm
 - b. verbally abusing
 - c. challenging
 - d. firmly replying

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GRAMMAR QUIZ

GERUNDS and INFINITIVES

4 Complete these sixteen sentences to score your knowledge of GERUNDS and INFINITIVES.

1. My friend really enjoys ... books and magazines.
a) to read
b) reading
c) to reads
2. ... enough sleep is very important for good health.
a) Getting
b) Get
c) Is getting
3. ... is not allowed inside the building. You should go outside.
a) Smoke
b) Smokes
c) Smoking
4. I love ... a cup of tea in the early afternoon.
a) to drink
b) drink
c) to drinking
5. Thomas usually ... TV after he gets home from school.
a) watches
b) to watch
c) watching
6. I really dislike ... on holidays and weekends.
a) working
b) to work
c) work
7. ... along the beach is a great way to relax.
a) Walk
b) Walking
c) Walks
8. (A) Do you like ... Italian food?
(B) Yes, I do.
a) eat
b) to eating
c) to eat
9. I think that... a second language is fun.
a) learn
b) learning
c) to learning
10. Steven dislikes ... , so he usually takes a bus to work.
a) to drive
b) diving
c) drives
11. I like ..., but unfortunately I'm not very good at it.
a) to cook
b) cook
c) cooks
12. ... at this beach is not allowed after sunset.
a) To swimming
b) Swim
c) Swimming
13. Jennifer wants ... her friend in San Francisco next week.
a) to visit
b) visits
c) visiting
14. I ... one or two cups of coffee every morning.
a) to drink
b) drinking
c) drink
15. (A) Do you ... every day?
(B) No, I don't.
a) exercising
b) exercise
c) to exercise
16. ... is a great exercise, but you should remember to wear a helmet.
a) Cycles
b) Cycle
c) Cycling

15 - 16 = Excellent

13 - 14 = Good

12 or Less = Study More!