

PSYCHOLOGY WITH PROFESSOR SANDER THOMAES

TALKING POINTS

KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the attitude-behaviour gap? Give an example you have observed in the real world.
2. What is the Motive-Match Hypothesis?

COMPREHENSION

3. Why could it be more challenging for adolescents than for adults to exhibit eco-friendly behaviours?
4. Why have the researchers chosen to carry out their studies in China, Colombia and the Netherlands?

APPLICATION

5. What observations do you think Sander's team should record during the longitudinal study?
6. If you could choose a fourth country for the GREENTEENS programme, where would you choose? Why?

ANALYSIS

7. What do you think are the main flaws in current education programmes promoting pro-environmental behaviour?
8. Why do you think a small proportion of young people are environmental sceptics? Do you think this proportion is growing or shrinking?

SYNTHESIS

9. How would you design an experimental study to assess what factors make teenagers more likely to (for example) opt for a vegetarian option at a canteen?

EVALUATION

10. Do you think the researchers are likely to find more similarities or differences in approaches to eco-friendly behaviour in different cultures? What would you expect to find?
11. From your experience, do you agree with Sander that teenagers have a greater attitude-behaviour gap than adults? What evidence would you use to support your point of view?

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME OR IN THE CLASSROOM

Using the lessons learned in the article, design a publicity campaign aimed at adolescents, encouraging them to adopt a particular pro-environmental behaviour. This behaviour could be:

- Adopting a plant-based diet
- Going 'flight free' and taking holidays by train instead
- Avoiding 'fast fashion'
- Attending pro-environmental protests
- Any other eco-friendly behaviour

While designing your campaign, think about:

- What factors encourage teenagers to adopt eco-friendly behaviours?
- How many facts and figures should you include?
- How can you relate the campaign to teenagers' personal lives?
- What channels should you focus on for outreach (e.g. posters, social media, newspapers, events)?

When you have finished, present your campaign to your class. Encourage feedback and see whether any of your classmates are considering changing their behaviour as a result.

MORE RESOURCES

This video from SciShow explains the changes that happen to the brain during adolescence:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiduiTq1ei8>

This article explores a different angle to promoting eco-friendly behaviour: the role of connection with nature:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-51110546>

This article from Rob Greenfield gives some tips on starting your own environmental campaign:

<https://www.robgreenfield.org/diyactivism/>

This interactive e-publication from the United Nations provides a huge range of information on understanding the state of the environment and catalysing change:

<https://www.unep.org/resources/geo-6-youth>