Adolescence: Psychosocial Development

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Note: Worth Publishers provides online Instructor and Student Tool Kits, DVD Student Tool Kits, and Instructor and Student video resources in DevelopmentPortal for use with the text. See Part I: General Resources for information about these materials and the text Lecture Guides for a complete list by text chapter.

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Introducing Adolescence: Psychosocial Development

Teaching Tip: The Seven Keys to Excellent Teaching

Master teacher Bill Buskist of Auburn University has extensively studied the art of teaching. Collating the musings of master teachers, and findings of studies of award-winning teachers and student evaluations, Buskist notes that excellent teachers:

- Ask the right questions about teaching. They recognize that the responsibility for improved teaching rests on their shoulders.
- Take calculated risks in teaching. Master teachers are constantly tinkering with their teaching in order to improve.
- Understand that teaching is social behavior. Master teachers recognize that high levels of rapport create positive learning environments.
- Are passionate about teaching, students, and their subject matter. Buskist puts it this way, “No passion, no inspiration. No inspiration, no powerful impact on student learning.”
- Place student learning front and center. Master teachers place more emphasis on promoting thinking and analyzing than they do on content.
- Set high academic standards. Excellent teachers convey their expectations to students and work to help them achieve those expectations.
- Reflect on the quality of their teaching. Master teachers engage in frequent formative assessment.

Each of these keys is, of course, a subject worthy of extensive elaboration and discussion. However, the list is also a useful reminder for even the most experienced among us of what we all should strive for in our courses. Buskist suggests identifying specific days each week when you will pause from your busy sched-

ule for 10–15 minutes in the solitude of your office or home to reflect on the quality of your teaching, and what you can do to improve it based on the seven keys.

Buskist, B. (2011). 7 steps to becoming an excellent teacher (or at least a better teacher). National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology. St. Petersburg Beach, FL.

“On Your Own” Activity: Developmental Fact or Myth?

Before students read about psychosocial development during adolescence, have them respond to the true-false statements in Handout 1. The correct answers are shown below. Class discussion can focus on the origins of any developmental misconceptions that are demonstrated in your students’ incorrect answers.

1. T 6. F
2. T 7. F
3. T 8. F
4. T 9. T
5. T 10. T

AV: Journey Through the Life Span, Program 6: Adolescence

See Adolescence: Biosocial Development for a description of Program 6 and the accompanying observation modules, which cover the entire unit on adolescence.

AV: Transitions Throughout the Life Span, Program 16: Who Am I?

As young people strain to adopt adult roles, they are still in the process of discovering who they are, a process that takes place in the midst of an explosion of change—changing bodies, changing hormones, changing schools, and changing relationships. Program 16 focuses on the psychosocial development—particularly the formation of identity—required for the attainment of adult status and maturity.

The second segment discusses the influence of friends, family, community, and culture as powerful social forces that help or hinder the adolescent’s transition from childhood to adulthood. Kathleen Berger provides expert commentary, and the special challenges faced by ethnic minority teens are explored.
The program concludes with the message that while no other period of life is characterized by so many changes in the three domains of development, for most young people the teenage years are happy ones. Furthermore, serious problems in adolescence do not necessarily lead to lifelong problems.

**AV: Adolescence: Current Issues** (2 segments, 32 and 24 min., Child Development Media)

(See description in Adolescence: Biosocial Development.)

**Classroom Activity: Using Literature to Teach Adolescent Psychosocial Development**

The General Resources section includes some Classroom Activities that illustrate a broad range of developmental topics and can be used at any point during the course. One of these (“Using Literature to Teach Developmental Psychology”) discusses Maya Angelou’s *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. The second half of Angelou’s marvelous book illustrates the challenges of puberty and identity formation during adolescence, as well as the impact of the peer group, the formation of sexual identity, and the beginnings of interest in parenthood and vocations.

Following the guidelines given for this activity, instruct your students to write a term paper discussing how Angelou’s adolescent experiences exemplify two or three aspects or topics of development. Alternatively, assign sections of the book to be discussed in class.

**Classroom Activity: Problem-Solving Skills**

To help your students appreciate some of the problems adolescents face, and to improve their problem-solving skills, you might assign groups or committees to suggest interventions in the following situations. In each case the group should provide actual names and phone numbers of organizations or agencies that would be contacted. Tell students that they can use the Internet to obtain the necessary information.

1. **You know a runaway 15-year-old girl. She is undecided about whether she wants to return home because her father, an alcoholic, is periodically abusive.**
2. **A friend of your younger sister has announced her plans to drop out of high school and begin an acting/modeling career. Because she looks up to you, the younger girl asks you for guidance.**
3. **You learn quite by accident that an acquaintance has made an unsuccessful suicide attempt.**
4. **You are a high school English teacher. A composition written by one of your students is very confused and emotional, but it leads you to believe that the writer may be a long-term victim of sexual abuse at home.**

Responses will vary depending on the resources available in your community. The goal is to provide students with experience in identifying appropriate resources for handling the specific needs of troubled adolescents.

**Classroom Activity: Introducing Adolescents, the Risk Takers—Especially in the United States**

This activity was introduced in the discussion of biosocial development during adolescence. If you did not use it then, you may want to use it in relation to psychosocial development in adolescence, which deals with suicide, violence, and other risky teen behaviors.

**Identity**

**AV: The Development of Self** (60 min., Insight Media)

This program explores the development of self-concept and self-esteem through research using the Perceived Competence Scale for Children, which measures self-concept in the areas of scholastic performance, athletic competence, popularity, and appearance. It also examines how self-esteem is affected by puberty and various clinical disorders associated with low self-esteem.

**“On Your Own” Activity: Who Am I?**

Identity formation is a primary task of adolescence. Ideally, adolescents begin to sense their own uniqueness in the larger social world of which they are a part.

To help students explore the process of their own identity formation, have them complete Handout 2, which asks them to define their identity in terms of their social roles, responsibilities, groups to which they belong, beliefs and values, personality traits and abilities, as well as their needs, feelings, and behavior patterns. They are then asked to rank each item—from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important)—according to its importance to their identity now and five years ago.

The difference between the two rankings should make it obvious that the development of identity is not confined to any one age. Older students in particular will clearly see that identity, like the life story itself, continues to unfold over the entire life span.

An interesting follow-up to this exercise would be to summarize the class’s responses, noting any systematic differences in how identity is defined at younger and older ages. If you do this analysis, make sure you control for the current ages of your students. Do younger students, for example, define themselves more in terms of careers and future goals? Older students in terms of family and generativity?

Note: The Instructor Media Tool Kit for this chapter contains several video clips of teenagers of varying ages responding to the question, “Who are you?” You might introduce this activity by playing several of these brief clips.

**AV: Who Am I? Psychosocial Development During Adolescence** (30 min., Insight Media)

Focusing on Erik Erikson’s views of adolescence, this film depicts how adolescents strive to adopt adult roles and forge their identities.
AV: Adolescence: Social and Emotional Development (30 min., Child Development Media)
This video focuses on the adolescent's search for identity, noting that in the course of this search, teenagers may be in several different identity statuses at the same time. The importance of friends and the larger peer group in offering support and status is also highlighted.

AV: Adolescent Personality Development (30 min., Insight Media)
This film examines the adolescent's search for identity, the development of independence, and the exploration of sexuality during a sometimes tumultuous stage of life. The theories of personality proposed by G. Stanley Hall, Margaret Mead, Sigmund Freud, and Erik Erikson are discussed.

AV: Girls in America: Identity and Adolescence (2 parts, 57 min. each, Corporation for Public Broadcasting)
This award-winning two-part series investigates the struggle of today's teenage girls to establish identities that reflect their own hopes and perceptions rather than social stereotypes. Program One, "Run Like a Girl," probes many of the challenges of adolescence, including body image, dating, bulimia, divorce, and teen pregnancies. Centered on the world of competitive sports, the female athletes discuss their search for identity and self-esteem while resisting the social expectations of others. Program Two, "Smile Pretty," centers on the competitive world of the beauty pageant. Teenage girls from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds discuss the allure of pageantry, modeling, and their struggle for identity.

AV: Reviving Ophelia (38 min., Media Education Foundation)
Reviving Ophelia, by clinical psychologist Mary Pipher, was one of the most talked-about books when it was first published. In this award-winning program, the author discusses the challenges facing young persons today, especially resisting the influence of the media and popular culture in shaping their identities. She also offers concrete ideas for girls, boys, parents, and teachers to help free girls from these "toxic influences." A study guide is also available.

"On Your Own" Activity: How to Speak Gen X and Gen Y
To help students explore cohort differences in the process of identity formation, have them complete Handout 3, which explores cohort effects, stereotypes, and targeted advertising for Generation X (those born between 1965 and the late 1970s or 1980) and Generation Y (those born between the late 1970s or early 1980s and 1995). Gen Y is also known as the Millennial Generation (or Millennials), Generation Next, Net Generation, and Echo Boomers. The actual years used for each cohort is controversial; it depends on your source.

An interesting alternative to this exercise would be to have students create their own campaigns for a product (clothing, for example) and present them to the class as if they were pitching their proposal to an actual manufacturer or board of directors of an advertising agency. You might encourage them to construct posters, or use video, to bring their ideas to life in front of the class. The class could then either vote on which campaigns most accurately targeted the two cohorts or select the best individual features from various campaigns and combine them into a class campaign. To introduce this assignment, you might first present some of the information from the Classroom Activity on page 6, "The Scoop on Generation X and Generation Y."

Critical Thinking Activity: Identity Statuses: Four Cases
Each unit of these resources contains a critical thinking exercise designed specifically to test students' critical thinking about a topic covered in the text. Handout 4 contains case studies of adolescents representing each of the four identity statuses. In this case, consider distributing the handout after the text section on identity has been assigned but before the lecture on this topic, so that students will be challenged to think through the material. The cases can then be used in a lecture to elaborate upon the identity statuses.

The answers to this unit's Critical Thinking Activity follows:

1. Rudy. This is an example of a moratorium. In the United States, the most obvious place to engage in such a moratorium is college, which is allowing Rudy to sample a variety of academic areas before choosing a career.

2. Melissa. This is an example of identity achievement. Melissa is self-directed and thoughtful and has established her own career goals by abandoning some of those of her parents and society and accepting others.

3. Lynn. This is an example of foreclosure. You might have felt that Lynn's case falls into the identity-achievement category. However, several aspects of the description point toward foreclosure: (1) Lynn avoids exploring alternatives in her social life (she resists the influence of someone who is very different from her and her mother; she avoids men who might bring out other facets of her personality). (2) Her academic interests are "unwavering." (3) Her interests coincide with those of a much-admired parent.

4. Daniel. This is an example of role confusion. Daniel apparently has few goals and does not care much about finding an identity.
AV: Cultural Identity Development (64 min., Insight Media)

Although lengthy, this film presents a probing look at five levels of minority development. It also discusses how clinical psychologists and counselors incorporate an understanding of each client's cultural identity into their treatment.

Teaching Tip: “Coming of Age” in Films, TV Programs, and Music Videos

Because teenagers fit squarely in the demographic group that Hollywood strives to appeal to, there is never a shortage of recent movies that can be used to stimulate a good class discussion of key issues in adolescent psychosocial development. To broaden your students' understanding of such concepts as identity and intimacy, you might ask them to discuss recent films, television programs, and music videos that explore “coming of age.” Common themes might include the loss of innocence (sexual and otherwise), the events of moratorium, rejection of parental values or eventual acceptance of them, problems of peer acceptance, and difficulties in developing intimacy. Also evident in these films are such topics as adolescent fantasies and egocentrism (see Adolescence: Cognitive Development) and adolescent decision making about sexual behavior. Ask your students what conclusions (if any) about adolescent development can be drawn from these films. You might also explore the question of why so many films, television programs, and videos focus on the adolescent experience. One reason, of course, is that so many consumers of these products are adolescents. Are there other reasons?

If your class consists mostly of traditional undergraduates, many students will already have seen the relevant films, and you need only ask for their thoughts regarding how developmental issues were addressed. Four older, but still relevant films are Thirteen, Spider-Man (and Spider-Man 2 and 3), Finding Forrester, and Mean Girls.

Thirteen is a 2003 film that depicts what many would consider a highly dysfunctional family. The family's single mother (portrayed by actress Holly Hunter) takes care of everyone except herself and her children. Her unemployed, recovering addict of a boyfriend wanders in and out of the picture, as does her former husband. But the real focus of the film is Tracy, the family's teenage daughter, who struggles to come of age in an abusive, intergenerational family, where alcohol, drugs, and sex are the main coping mechanisms. The "cutting scenes" are graphic and unsettling, as is the strongly implied abuse of Tracy and the cruelty of her best friend Evie. Be forewarned: This is an R-rated film with sexual and drug content, adult language, and mature themes.

Spider-Man was first released in 2002; Spider-Man 2 came out in 2004, and Spider-Man 3 appeared in 2007. The series centers on the ageless, unlikely superhero Peter Parker, an angst-ridden, geeky high schooler portrayed by Tobey Maguire. Because the comic book hero first appeared in 1962, “Spidey” has been the favorite of teenagers all over the world, who readily identify with his introspective nature and daily struggles to grow up. All the themes of adolescent psychosocial development are touched upon, including the physical and psychological changes of puberty (magnified by the superhero's daily transformation from teen to superhero), the search for identity, guilt, and unrequited love.

Finding Forrester is a 2000 film that offers a moving account of the importance of friendships and intergenerational relationships to psychosocial development. The protagonists are Jamal, a 16-year-old African American who lives with his mother in the Bronx and has a secret passion for writing, and William Forrester (played by Sean Connery), a reclusive author (and voyeur of the outside world) who eventually becomes Jamal's mentor. As their relationship develops, Jamal learns to be proud of his talents and Forrester learns how to live again and share feelings with others.

Mean Girls is a 2004 film about 16-year-old Cady Heron (played by Lindsay Lohan), who until recently was home-schooled by her zoologist parents living in African bush country. Her entry into public high school life goes well until she violates teen social rules when she falls in love with her friend's ex-boyfriend.

Teaching Tip: Vocational Identity

To help students learn more about vocational identity and career development, invite the campus career counselor to speak to the class. This will not only serve to teach students more about the process of career counseling and about issues of career development but will also expose them to someone they should get to know before they graduate.

Relationships with Adults

AV: Building on Adolescent Experience (95 min., Insight Media)

This video profiles Matthew Selekman’s solution-oriented therapy approach to working with a mother and her angry adolescent daughter.

AV: Drugs and Sex (16 minutes, Magna Systems)

This short film focuses on the difficulties many parents have in discussing sex and drugs with their children. It also offers practical examples of how to do so in a manner that builds trust and resiliency.

Classroom Activity: The Scoop on Generation X and Generation Y

Gen X is generally accepted to be those 41 million people born between 1965 and the late 1970s, a shorter period than the 19 years for the baby boom (1946 through 1964). Gen Xers, who are now between the ages of 31 and 46 are caught in the middle of two much larger cohorts: baby boomers on one end (the largest population group in the history of the United
States) and Gen Y (those born since 1978) on the other. Here are some recent Gen X and Gen Y (the Millennials or Generation Next) demographic statistics:

In 2010, the estimated median age of U.S. citizens was 36.8 years (males: 35.5, females: 38.1).

Generation X:
- 31% of Gen Xers had earned a college degree.
- 81% of people in Generation X were employed full time or part time.
- 37% of Gen Xers’ mothers worked outside the home when their kids were growing up.
- 16.7% of Gen Xers were Hispanic, now the largest U.S. minority group.
- 39-year-old Michael Dell, founder of Dell Computers, was the highest ranked Gen Xer on the Forbes list of the “World's Richest People.”

Generation Y:
- 90% of Gen Yers own a computer.
- 82% own a mobile phone.
- 72% send or receive SMS (text) messages.
- Gen Yers spend more time online than they do watching television.
- In contrast to Gen Xers, who use technology when it supports a “lifestyle need,” for Gen Yers, technology is embedded in everything they do. (Gen Yers have been called the first “native online population.”)

The members of Gen Y in the United States number more than 75 million. Based on birth rates, the earlier Gen X has been said to represent a “baby bust” decline in births that followed the 1950s boom. Because of its larger size, Gen Y is sometimes described as an “echo boom” of rising births after 1975. At about the same time, an unprecedented bull market took hold of the economy and lasted until 2000, and baby boomers created a new, child-focused culture, which brought such innovations as no-tolerance schools and standards-based learning.

Although experts continue to debate the actual dates of the generational boundary between Gen X and Gen Y, they agree that there are major cohort differences between the groups. Among the experts who are looking most closely at these differences are marketing professionals, who determine the content of commercial advertising. A decade ago, William Strauss and Neil Howe, who prefer to refer to Gen Yers as “Millennials,” predicted that by 2000, the “teen pathologies” of Generation Y, including substance abuse, crime, suicide, and adolescent pregnancy, would decline. In their most recent discussion of the Millennium generation, Strauss and Howe maintain that Millennials differ from older Gen Xers in many important ways:

- Unlike earlier generations, Gen Yers have a good relationship with their parents. According to a Gallup Poll, 90 percent of teens say they are very close to their parents; in 1974, more than 40 percent of baby boomers said they would be better off without their parents. Millennials are expected to retain these close parental bonds even after leaving home.
- Parental monitoring remains strong for this cohort, as their so-called “helicopter parents” are increasingly found on campus, guarding against threats to their offspring’s development.
- Gen Y is less influenced by rebellious pop culture icons. The ability of rather ordinary-looking singers to rise to the top of their profession exemplifies their rejection of the overhyped, extreme culture of the 1990s. Consequently, marketing executives believe that the edgy brand associations that appealed to Gen X will not appeal to the more conventional Millenium generation, which seems to display a greater interest in family, religion, and community.
- Under greater pressure by their parents and society to achieve, Millennials are put off by the “slacker” archetype that was more appealing to Gen X. Advertising that belittles those who work hard and celebrates the “accidental success of airheads” doesn’t impress this generation.
- In contrast to ultra-individualist Gen Xers, Millennials are more group-oriented. In addition, because of the relative success of programs such as affirmative action and Title IX, cultural and gender gaps narrowed somewhat during Gen Yers’ childhood years. However, the gap between rich and poor widened. Consequently, Millennials may be less hung up on race, gender, or ethnicity than their parents, but just as, if not more, sensitive to economic class.


AV: The Neglected Generation (30 min., Insight Media) Focusing on the often-ignored subject of child neglect, this video begins by noting that half of all American teenagers suffer from a lack of parental monitoring that seriously increases their risk of developmental problems. The final segment explores the roles that families, communities, and governments can play in primary prevention of adolescent problems.
**Classroom Activity: Classroom Debate: “Resolved: Today’s Parents Are Too __________.”**

Parental influence on the young person’s development remains strong during adolescence. Most of your students are likely to hold very strong opinions about their own upbringing, the “best way” to raise children, and the kind of parent they either currently are or hope to become. As you discuss parenting styles in class, listen for any strongly expressed opinions, especially thoughts on “what’s wrong with parents today.” From these opinions, fill in the blank in the resolution above and follow the guidelines in the General Resources section of this manual for scheduling a classroom debate.

**Peer Power**

**AV: Among Equals** (57 min., Insight Media)

This program explores the crucial importance of the peer group for adolescent psychosocial development. The topics explored include identity formation, moral development, gender differences, friendship, and the emergence of intimate relationships.

**AV: Teenage Relationships** (30 min., RMI Media Productions)

Focusing on social and emotional development during adolescence, this engaging video features views of high school students on peer relationships, sexual activity, and other pertinent issues.

**Teaching Tip: Gangs, Cliques, Crews, and “Posses”**

Although most of your students will probably be only a year or two out of high school, you may find it helpful to initiate your discussion of the influence of peer groups on adolescent psychosocial development by refreshing everyone’s memory of high school, where every day can be a struggle to fit in. Start the class with this brief scene in the life of one high school sophomore:

> It was one careless moment in the cafeteria that she now believes will haunt her forever, or at least until graduation, whichever comes first. Blond, smart, athletic and well-off, she must have thought she could get away with sitting down with a couple of gawky skaters from the fringe of high-school society, if only to interview them about hip-hop music for the school newspaper. She should have known that in high school, appearance outweighs motive by 100 to 1. There were giggles and stares, then loss of gossip privileges and exile from her seat at the center table next to the jocks. Now, a year later, recovered from a bout of anorexia as she tried to starve her way back into favor, she has found new friends. But the formerly cool sophomore, too humiliated to bear being identified, views her years in a West Coast high school as “hell.”

Although many developmentalists believe that today's teens are more tolerant of differences than they were a generation or two ago, since the invention of high school, adolescents have been forming cliques, mentally ranking them, and struggling to attain (or maintain) membership in those groups at the top of the pecking order. As an interesting discussion of a classic cohort effect, you and your students might swap stories of the various in- and out-groups from high school. Although there certainly are regional variations, the relative positions of some groups have shifted to reflect changes in society. Cheerleaders, for example, are not placed on quite so high a pedestal as they were in the past. Similarly, kids who experiment with drugs are no longer considered glamorous. In addition, today's groups are much more likely than groups a generation ago to include both boys and girls; some experts trace this development to the influence of television, which provides teens with earlier familiarity with the opposite sex.

The positions of some groups, however, have not changed. Male jocks continue to be at the top of the social dominance hierarchy in most high schools, enforcing social codes, often picking on obese, “wimpy,” and “geeky” kids. Also unchanged is the tendency of groups to solidify membership with a unique uniform. As science writer Jerry Adler notes, “Chinos and button-down shirts mark kids as preppies a thousand miles from Andover; baggy jeans signify hip-hop on a Laotian kid in Iowa no less than on a homeboy straight out of Bed-Stuy.” And years before the tragic shootings at Columbine High School, black trench-coats were favored by teens at the fringe of high school society, who would rather die than conform to how other kids dressed.

As high schools have grown in size, and society has become even more stratified, the diversity of clubs, sports gangs, cliques, and “posses” has skyrocketed. At Glenbrook South, a typical high school in suburban Chicago, there are more than 70 clubs and two dozen sports teams. In addition to the athletes and members of recognized clubs, the cliques include preppies, gangsters, pot-smoking skaters, sullen punks, gays, nerds, and morbid Goths. Glenbrook has developed its own clique lexicon, which includes:

- **Backstage people**, who are drama and arts students who linger in the school’s auditorium to do homework, talk, and just “hang out”
- **Bandies**, or musicians who stick to themselves
- **Wall kids**, or Abercrombies, who favor preppy clothing and whose turf is a wall outside the school cafeteria
- **Trophy-case kids**, who oddly choose to hang out by the school’s awards case, despite their favored punk clothing consisting of hooded, black sweat-shirts
- **Student-council kids**, who are clean-cut and popular

The University of Michigan has also compiled a list of high school cliques, which includes jock, prep, hippie/hipster, princess/miss perfect, nerd, thespian, and band/choir geek.

In an attempt to prevent the negative impact of cliques, stereotyping, and scapegoating on high school
life, some schools have experimented with enforced, egalitarian cultures in which all students wear neutral uniforms and are required to participate on a sports team. However, the results have been mixed, at best. David Smith, the principal at Glenbrook South, notes that “there’s no avoiding the fact that adolescence is a tribal society. It’s just the nature of the thing.” And some experts believe that efforts to completely block this high school tribalism are misguided, seeing this experience as essential practice for adult society.


Classroom Activity: The Role of the Peer Group
To help students understand the role of the peer group during adolescence, you might have the class talk about their own social experiences as adolescents. Did they hang out in loosely associated groups of girls and boys, gradually joining together? Did they double- or triple-date to avoid the awkwardness of being alone with someone they “liked”? Did they have a best friend of the same sex with whom they shared details of their sexual experiences in order to confirm that they were normal? Did they belong to any special groups, such as a sorority or a fraternity? Were they rejected by such a group? In either case, how did they feel?

Observational Activity: Adolescent Peer Relationships
As noted in the text, the socializing role of peers becomes especially prominent during adolescence. Teenagers help one another in many ways—by providing a sounding board of contemporaries who can function as a self-help group, by providing social support when needed, and by creating a safe arena in which the adolescent can try out various behaviors and personality characteristics.

This activity is intended to help your students explore how the concept of friendship changes during adolescence. Ask them to interview a person at least several years younger than they are, who is between the ages of 10 and 19. They may feel most comfortable interviewing a friend, a relative, or a friend’s relative. They must obtain written permission from the person’s parent or legal guardian before they conduct the interview.

To help students who may not be familiar with interview techniques, Handout 5 provides questions that can serve as guidelines for structuring the interview. Students may want to copy these questions onto a separate sheet of paper, leaving space for answers. By taking notes as the interviewee talks, the student will be better able to prepare a complete and accurate summary for the follow-up report (Handout 6).


AV: My Bodyguard (96 min., Films Incorporated) Breaking Away (99 min., Films Incorporated)
Two touching, amusing, insightful movies about friendship between adolescent boys. The first is about “tough guys” in Chicago, the latter about the efforts of four Indiana boys to win a bicycle race. Since they are full-length films that were successful in movie theaters, they are a splashy, expensive way to set off the discussion on adolescent psychosocial development. Depending on your students and your budget, however, they may be well worth it. For instance, Breaking Away is filled with examples of a father’s difficulty in understanding his son’s attempt to find an identity—a humorous and touching example of the differing goals and needs of the two generations and their attempts to bridge the gap. (This film is also useful for discussions of biosocial and cognitive development during adolescence.)

AV: Coping with Peer Pressure (15 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
This brief film helps teen viewers learn to cope with peer pressure by realistically examining the consequences of their actions. A teenager who was nearly led astray by peers because of her low self-esteem is profiled.

“On Your Own” Activity: Survey of Sexual Knowledge
Handout 7, the Allgeiers’ Survey of Sexual Knowledge, can be used to introduce adolescent sexuality and the controversy concerning sex education.

While the evidence indicates that adolescents are well informed regarding sexuality and contraception, the source of that information is generally not their parents. For example, Elizabeth and Albert Allgeier report that when students were asked to name their most useful source of information regarding sexual behavior and pregnancy, 49 percent reported their school, 20 percent books, 10 percent friends, 13 percent their mothers, 2 percent their boyfriend or girlfriend, and 0 percent their fathers.

Correct answers to the survey questions are:

AV: Woman’s Talk 5: Sex Education (18 min., Corinth)
Questions from young children through adolescents are used to illustrate the parents’ role in providing sex education. While the film is pretty basic, it could be a good springboard for uncovering some of the embarrassment and misinformation that most adults bring to discussions with their children about sex. As a follow-up, the class might be divided into small groups and individuals asked to tell how their parents treated the subject. Or one student might role-play a blunt, curious child, with another student playing the parent trying to cope.

AV: Good Girl (45 min., Filmakers Library)
This film examines the psychological and sociological aspects of adolescence by showing the daily activities and thoughts of a young girl growing up in America in the 1950s. Particularly interesting is her sexual development in an era when there were only two kinds of girls: good and bad.

Sadness and Anger

Depression

AV: Dealing with Teens: A Guide to Survival (52 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
Taking a practical approach, this film offers suggestions for discussing a variety of issues with adolescents: dating, sexual activity, emotions, and substance abuse. Hosted by actor Howard Hesseman, the program also presents a list of warning signs for caregivers concerned about their teen’s behavior.

AV: Teen Depression (16 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
This brief film chronicles the lives of several teenagers diagnosed with clinical depression, analyzing how they became aware of their disorder, how it has changed their lives, and how they have been helped through therapy. Experts also explain the psychological and chemical symptoms, causes, and treatments for depression.

AV: Childhood’s End: A Look at Adolescent Suicide (28 min., Filmakers Library)
A documentary look at three adolescents who tried to commit suicide. Two of them, both girls, reflect on the reasons behind their attempted suicides. The third, a boy, was “successful” and is represented by his two best friends, who wonder what they could have done to help. This film distinguishes the hype about suicide—for example, the little-known fact that suicide is much more common among the elderly—from the reality—every time an adolescent tries to kill him or herself, it is a tragic sign that our social support system has failed.

AV: Gifted Adolescents and Suicide (26 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
An adaptation of a Phil Donahue program, this video profiles two couples who lost their intellectually talented 17-year-olds to suicide. The program focuses on the need to recognize the pressure of expectations on overachievers.

AV: Everything to Live For (52 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
The dramatic opening of this film points out that suicide is second only to automobile accidents as the cause of death in adolescence. This documentary profiles four adolescents: two who attempted and “failed” at suicide, and two who succeeded. Family members and the surviving “failures” talk openly about the presumed causes of the drastic measures.

AV: Suicide: The Teenager’s Perspective (26 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
Each year nearly half a million teenagers attempt suicide. This film deals with the tragedy of adolescent suicide and attempts to educate viewers so that they will recognize the signs of impending suicide in others. Jim Wells, a nationally recognized expert on teenage suicide, provides some unique insights.

AV: Teen Suicide (19 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
A documentary that examines the increase in teenage suicide, this film explores some of the reasons behind the increase and identifies behavior patterns that are considered to be warning signs alerting family and friends to possible problems.

AV: Teen Suicide: Sara’s Diary (14 min., Magna Systems)
Based on a true story, this poignant film examines the subjects of depression, suicide, and bullying. The subject of much teasing and bullying in her school, Sara makes an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. Afterward, her main tormentor discovers her diary and learns that Sara was really no different from anyone else in the school.

Classroom Activity: Suicide Prevention
To sensitize students to the need for teen suicide prevention programs, you might ask someone from your local suicide-prevention center to report on adolescent suicide attempts in your community. What is the frequency, cause, and outcome of these attempts? How does your community compare with nationwide averages?
Alternatively, you might ask whether any of your students have had a close friend who attempted suicide. Since this is a very sensitive topic, you may want to announce the discussion in advance, so that anyone
having personal experience with this issue might first talk with you about it in private. Then, you can either relate your informants’ experiences to the class, or, if they wish, have them do so.

**Delinquency and Disobedience**

*Internet Activity: Internet Resources for Troubled Adolescents*

The Internet contains a wealth of information for teens and their families who are struggling with serious problems such as suicidal ideation and delinquency. For this activity, ask students to search the Web to find and explore some of these resources using information and questions from Handout 8 as a guide.

*Classroom Activity: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*

To stimulate a lively class discussion of gender differences in emotional development and the roots of adolescent lawbreaking, you might prepare a brief lecture on Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson’s thesis that boys are socialized to be emotionally illiterate. Alternatively, you might assign different groups of students to report on portions of their book *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys,* which sparked a national debate on parenting. In the biblical story of Cain and Abel, the two brothers—both eager to please God—each make an offering. The Lord expresses pleasure with Abel’s offering of a prized lamb from his flock but shows little reaction to Cain’s gift of the fruits of his labor. Although Cain is visibly distressed—“his countenance fell”—he is unable to express his humiliation in words. God then admonishes Cain for his self-pity and anger:

> Why are you distressed,  
> And why is your face fallen?  
> Surely, if you do right, there is uplift.  
> But if you do not do right,  
> Sin crouches at the door;  
> Its urge is toward you,  
> Yet you can be its master. (Genesis 4:6)

In other words, “Get over it. Sure, you’re mad. But count to 10. Think about it. Do the right thing.”

But Cain is either not listening or he is unable to follow the path of nonviolence. Later, out of anger and jealousy, Cain takes his brother out to the field and murders him. When the Lord confronts Cain with the question of what has become of his brother, Cain replies that he does not know. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” he asks. In reply, the Lord banishes Cain to the land of Nod to become a “ceaseless wanderer on earth.”

While the story of Cain and Abel has long been considered a parable of sibling rivalry, psychologists Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson see it as a reflection of the emotional life of boys today—“a boy’s desire to be loved and respected, and his propensity to respond to humiliation and shame with anger and violence rather than reflection and communication.”

In the views of these theorists and clinicians, it is the legacy of Cain that surfaces in aggressive, delinquent, and violent boys. Like Cain, boys who have been disappointed, frustrated, humiliated, or disrespected often become angry and lash out. And they do so almost reflexively, without pausing to consider the consequences of their actions—to themselves or their victims. Like the shooters in the 1998 schoolyard killings in Jonesboro, Arkansas, many of these violent teenagers feel sorry afterward, but by then it is too late.

Kindlon and Thompson believe that the roots of male violence, depression, drinking, drug use, and suicidal ideation can be found in the destructive emotional training that boys receive. This emotional miseducation begins with the ways in which parents, teachers, coaches, and other influential adults respond to boys and with the ways in which they teach them to respond to others. In doing so, too often traditional gender stereotypes discourage emotional awareness in boys. Research studies of how parents interact with their male and female offspring reveal that, when girls ask questions about emotions, mothers generally give longer, more detailed explanations. Seeing a child who is crying, a young girl might ask why. In response, her mother is likely to speculate about the reasons behind the child’s emotions or to validate her daughter’s observation that the child is hurt or sad or has lost a toy. If a male child sees another child crying and asks why, the parent is likely to give a shorter answer that steers the child away from an emotional discussion. “I don’t know, he just is. Come on, it’s not polite to stare” is a typical reply.

Moreover, in these authors’ view, when boys express “ordinary levels of anger or aggression, or turn surly and silent,” their behavior is accepted as normal. Expressions of fear, sadness, anxiety, and other emotions that society considers “feminine” traits are treated in a way that sends the clear message that such emotions aren’t acceptable in boys. For this reason, most boys—like Cain—don’t know how to respond when they are frustrated with another person. Kindlon and Thompson maintain that boys’ emotional miseducation biases the way that they interpret incoming emotional signals in three ways:

- In boys, the motivation for aggression is more “defensive” rather than offensive or predatory. In their view, most violent boys are not “testosterone-laden beasts”; rather, they are vulnerable, emotionally cornered individuals, who use aggression as a form of armor to protect themselves.
- Boys are primed to see the world as a threatening place and to respond to that threat with aggression. Another aspect of their emotional miseducation is that boys are caught in a trap of trying to play an impossible “macho role,” in which they must, at all costs, prevent others from taking...
advantage of them. This emotional illiteracy means that boys often misread emotional cues in social situations, seeing neutral situations as threatening. In addition, boys are raised in a “culture of cruelty,” in which they often receive harsh discipline to “toughen them up.” “Whatever else it means to be a boy in our culture,” note Kindlon and Thompson, “it means that your actions are more likely to be misinterpreted as threatening or disobedient, that you are more likely than the girl next door to be punished or treated harshly.”

This gender bias shows up clearly in several ways. For example, judges commit boys to residential detention centers far more often than they do girls, even for the same offenses. As another example, researchers have found that boys are much more likely than girls to receive harsh physical discipline at school and in the home. Consider: African American boys are more than three times as likely as African American girls to receive corporal punishment. For every White girl who is physically punished, six White boys are hit. Asian boys are eight times more likely than Asian girls to be hit. Should we be surprised that these experiences leave boys expecting hostility in their interactions with others?

- Boys often don’t know or won’t admit what it is that makes them angry. In addition to their difficulty in reading others’ emotional signals, boys are often unable to pinpoint the source of their frustration and anger. As a result, they are more prone than girls to explosive outbursts or to displace their poorly understood anger toward an innocent bystander.

To protect the emotional life of boys, Kindlon and Thompson maintain that parents and educators must teach them first to attend to and understand their own emotions. How can this be accomplished? Boys must learn (a) to deal with the fact that life isn’t always fair and that they can’t go around hurting people every time they get angry; (b) to examine why they get angry, and then how to use words and other strategies to defuse their anger in nonviolent ways; (c) to consider how their actions affect others, to be more trusting, and not to see threats where they don’t exist; (d) to communicate with others more effectively; (e) that controlling their anger doesn’t make them sissies; and (f) that emotional courage and empathy are the sources of real strength in life. “If we teach our sons to honor and value their emotional lives,” the authors conclude, “if we can give boys an emotional vocabulary and the encouragement to use it, they will unclench their hearts.”


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**AV: Youth Terror: The View from Behind the Gun**

(First: 29 min., Part II: 19 min., CRM/McGraw-Hill)

Originally an *ABC News Close-Up*, this film interviews young criminals, attempting to explore the reasons, attitudes, and background factors that led to their crimes. It focuses on the serious delinquent who has been arrested several times. To keep this film in perspective, you might point out that less than 1 percent of American teenagers are arrested for serious crimes; on the other hand, more than a third of all the arrests for serious crimes in the United States involve people under age 18. In fact, if a person is ever going to be arrested for committing homicide, that arrest, statistically speaking, is more likely to occur at age 15 than at any other age. You might ask your students to think about two questions as they view the film: In what ways are the young people shown here similar to other teenagers who do not become crime statistics? What can be done to prevent future generations of young people from repeating the mistakes of the young people shown here?

**AV: Teens in Turmoil**

(26 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This program examines what it’s like to be a teenager in North America today, taking the position that growing up is harder and more dangerous today than ever before. It describes a high school crisis prevention program and two distinct approaches to handling troubled adolescents: tough-love and improved parent–child communication.

**AV: Breaking the Cycle of Violence**

(28 min., Insights Media)

The program focuses on the causes and prevention of youth violence. It features the commentary of community leaders and educators such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Paul Houston, and Ed Zigler.

**AV: Preventing Delinquency: The Social Developmental Approach**

(28 min., Filmakers Library)

Funded by the United States Department of Justice, this film explains the role parents, peers, school, and community can play in preventing delinquency. Providing the young person with legitimate sources of esteem, status, and achievement can make the delinquent path appear less attractive. Thus, prevention, rather than punishment, and a systems approach, rather than one that focuses on the “bad” boy, are highlighted.

**AV: Violence Prevention: What Every Parent Should Know**

(28 min., Magna Systems, Inc.)

Divided into three sections, this video discusses how children today view violence and the various interven-
Drug Use and Abuse

"On Your Own" Activity: Cohort Differences in Drug Use: A Questionnaire

Drug use among adolescents varies significantly from cohort to cohort. To demonstrate recent changes in drug-use patterns, ask students to use Handout 9 to conduct an interview with a contemporary high school student and contrast his or her responses to those of an older person (preferably one at least eight years older than the high school student).

Responses will vary. Some of the patterns mentioned in the text should emerge. For example, cocaine may be mentioned by current high school students but is less likely to be mentioned by the older person, whereas marijuana may appear to have been a bigger problem to the older interviewee. Class discussion can focus on the possible origins of cohort differences in drug use.

AV: Altered States: A History of Drug Abuse (57 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This captivating film traces the history of drug use in America from the days when the earliest immigrants developed an addiction for tobacco, through Prohibition, and up to the late twentieth century. It explores how drugs of choice have changed over time and documents the cultural, social, and political factors involved in drug use and addiction.

AV: Drugs: Uses and Abuses (8 segments, 20–34 min. each, Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This eight-part series takes a look at the history, medicinal and illegal use, and developmental impact of sedatives (part 1), narcotics (part 2), stimulants (part 3), hallucinogens (part 4), inhalants (part 5), THC (part 6), PCP (part 7), and steroids (part 8).

AV: The Next Generation (57 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

Taken from Bill Moyers’ five-part series on addiction, this program looks at community and family interventions designed to prevent drug abuse. One program works by teaching parents who are heroin addicts how to repair the damage their drug abuse has caused to their families. Another targets high-risk teens with intensive counseling provided during school.

AV: The Addicted Brain (26 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This award-winning film analyzes the biochemistry of the brain, focusing on the mechanisms of “runner’s high,” thrill-seeking, and OCD.

AV: Obsessions: The Biological Basis of Addiction (55 min., Insight Media)

This program examines the causes and treatment of various addictions, focusing on the interaction of nature and nurture in the origins of all obsessive behaviors. Russell Sachs discusses the ways addictions to drugs, alcohol, gambling, food, work, and sex, can negatively affect the individual and his or her family.

Internet Activity: Adolescent Drug Experimentation

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) is run by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMSHA has a Web site that includes information about the role of biopsychosocial factors in adolescent drug experimentation. Have students use the SAMSHA Web site (and any other Internet resources that they discover) to answer the questions in Handout 10.

AV: Alcohol and the Family: Breaking the Chain (25 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This video analyzes the signs of alcoholism, focusing on how family members, coworkers, and friends can intervene. It also discusses the impact of alcoholism on the children of alcoholics and provides an overview of various therapies for treating the disease.

AV: The Buzz Is Not for You: Teenage Drinking (30 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

The first part of this documentary on the persistent problem of teenage drinking focuses on its disruptive effects on development. In the second part, various interventions for helping teens avoid peer pressure to drink are described. Interviews with teenagers, law enforcement officers, educators, and developmentalists explore the wide range of issues related to alcohol abuse by adolescents.

AV: The Cliffs (15 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This brief minidrama tells the story of Robbie, who, after breaking his usual pattern of getting drunk every weekend, discovers that drinking responsibly allows him to be in control and enjoy life more.

AV: Kids Under the Influence (58 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

This award-winning program focuses on alcohol—the number-one drug problem among teenagers. Topics covered include physical and psychological disorders
caused by alcohol abuse, the influence of peer and advertising pressure, legal issues, and various approaches to correcting this widespread social problem.

Classroom Activity: Adolescent Drunken Driving
A troubling result of adolescent drug use is revealed in age-group statistics involving traffic fatalities. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) cites three reasons that young drivers have such poor driving performance: inexperience, risk-taking behavior and immaturity, and greater risk exposure. The last two factors, of course, parallel the text discussion of possible problems during the teen years. Adolescent impulsiveness and attraction to excitement may result in poor driving judgment and participation in high-risk behaviors such as speeding, talking on cell phones or texting while driving, drinking and driving, and not using a seat belt. Peer pressure may also encourage risk-taking by young, inexperienced drivers.

NHTSA also notes that a higher proportion of teenagers than adults are responsible for their fatal crashes because of their own driving errors.

- A larger percentage of fatal crashes involving teenage drivers are single-vehicle crashes compared with those involving other drivers. In this type of fatal crash, the vehicle usually leaves the road and overturns or hits a roadside object such as a tree or a pole.
- In general, a smaller percentage of teens wear their seat belts than do other drivers.
- A larger proportion of teen fatal crashes involve going too fast for road conditions, compared with crashes of other drivers.
- More teen fatal crashes occur when passengers—usually other teenagers—are in the car than do crashes involving other drivers. Two out of three teens who die as passengers are in vehicles driven by other teenagers.

Adolescent traffic fatalities may be due in part to cognitive immaturity. However, experts are focusing on two factors that are easier to legislate: driver inexperience and alcohol use. Consider the following sober statistics:

- In 2009, about 3,000 teens in the United States aged 15–19 were killed, and more than 350,000 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor vehicle crashes.
- Young people ages 15–24 represent only 14 percent of the U.S. population. However, they account for 30 percent ($19 billion) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries among males and 28 percent ($7 billion) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries among females.
- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration, the risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens than for older drivers.
- Approximately 240,000 to 360,000 of the nation’s 12 million current undergraduates will ultimately die from alcohol-related causes—more than the number that will get MA and PhDs combined.

Even though the number of teen drivers continues to increase, many high schools have dropped driver education courses (only 60 percent of drivers younger than 18 get training, compared with 85 percent in the late 1970s). The National Transportation Safety Board has therefore been encouraging states to set tougher standards for young drivers. For example, 15 states have adopted a lower standard for legal drunkenness for drivers younger than 21. And because more than half of teen driver fatalities occur at night, seven states have adopted curfews for younger drivers. New York—the most stringent in this respect—prohibits all 16- and 17-year-olds who haven’t taken driver’s education from driving between 9 P.M. and 5 A.M. Laws such as these, along with minimum drinking age laws, have been estimated to reduce traffic fatalities involving drivers 18 to 20 years old by 13 percent. These laws have saved an estimated 18,220 lives since 1975.


AV: Inhalant Abuse: Breathing Easy (24 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
Inhalant abuse is a particularly troubling form of addiction because inhalants are readily available, produce a rapid drug high that quickly leads to tolerance and dependence, and can cause permanent damage to the brain in a very short time. This program analyzes adolescent drug abuse, focusing on the psychological and environmental factors that lead to abuse. Interviews of former inhalant users are particularly effective in illustrating the variables involved in addiction.

AV: Running on Empty: Teens and Methamphetamines (27 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
This video probes the growing abuse of methamphetamine by teenagers. It begins by discussing the nature of the drug, and its effects on the body and central nervous system. It then traces the cycle of drug abuse, beginning with the extreme euphoria associated with initial use, and ending with the crushing lows that often lead to chronic depression.

AV: Pretty Colors: Inside America’s Rave Culture (66 min., Films for the Humanities and Sciences)
This gritty film follows Sarah and Stacey, two bored teenagers who have embraced L.A.’s underground rave scene to escape their dysfunctional families. Note: Some language in this film may be objectionable.
HANDOUT 1

Developmental Fact or Myth?

T  F  1. It is not unusual for young people to delay achievement by going to college.
T  F  2. Generally speaking, parent–adolescent conflict is about routine, day-to-day concerns.
T  F  3. During adolescence, peers have a stronger influence than parents on a young person's development.
T  F  4. Socially immature adolescents generally are the first to be attracted to members of the other sex.
T  F  5. Thinking about committing suicide is actually quite rare among high school students.
T  F  6. Worldwide, parasuicide is higher for males but completed suicide is higher for females.
T  F  7. Wealth and education decrease the incidence of suicide.
T  F  8. Arrests are more likely to occur during adolescence than in any other period of life.
T  F  9. Those who become career criminals show recognizable warning signs long before adulthood.
T  F  10. The younger people are when they first try a drug, the more likely they are to become addicted.
HANDOUT 2

Who Am I?

Part 1. To help you explore your own identity formation, write 10 answers to the question, “Who am I?” You may respond in terms of your social roles, responsibilities, or commitments; the groups to which you belong; your beliefs and values; your personality traits and abilities; and your needs, feelings, and behavior patterns. List only those features that are really important to you—features that, if lost, would make a real difference to your sense of who you are.

After you have completed your list, indicate the importance of each feature to your identity today by assigning it a number from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). Finally, rank the items according to their importance to you five years ago.

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<th>Rank Five Years Ago</th>
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<td>1. I am:</td>
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My current age is:______________
HANDOUT 2 (continued)

Part 2. In the space below, briefly explain any changes you observed in your rankings. What makes the item ranked 1 each time the most important?
HANDOUT 3

How to Speak Gen X and Gen Y

Describe the cohort into which members of Generation X and Generation Y were born by answering the following questions.

1. What birth years span each generation?
   Generation X:
   Generation Y:

2. What important historical events occurred during the formative years of each generation?
   Generation X:
   Generation Y:

3. In response to the question, “What is the biggest difference between Gen X and Gen Y?” one Web site offered this tongue-in-cheek response: “Most of Gen Y actually thinks being clean and looking clean is a good idea.” What are several other popular stereotypes of the members of these generations?
   Generation X stereotypes:
   Generation Y stereotypes:
4. Each generation seems to develop its own spokespersons and icons, often from the media (singers, actors and actresses, sports figures, etc.) and politics. Who are some of the icons for these two generations?

Generation X icons:

Generation Y icons:

5. Marketing companies develop advertising campaigns for products and events that target specific age groups. For instance, it has been suggested that Generation X advertising is edgy and focuses on the extreme pop culture of the 1990s.

a. What are some specific examples of this type of Generation X marketing?

b. What kinds of advertising campaigns target the members of Generation Y? What are some of the general themes in these campaigns? How do they differ from advertising that targets Generation X?

c. If you were in charge of creating an advertising campaign for a new line of casual clothes, how would you approach it for a magazine ad or television commercial that targets each generation?

Generation X campaign:

Generation Y campaign:
HANDOUT 4

Critical Thinking Activity: Identity Statuses: Four Cases

Now that you have read and reviewed the material on psychosocial development during adolescence, take your learning a step further by testing your critical thinking skills on this pattern-recognition exercise.

The following brief case studies illustrate the identity statuses proposed by Erik Erikson and others. For each case, suggest the most appropriate identity status—identity achievement, foreclosure, identity diffusion, and moratorium, and describe your reasoning.

1. Rudy. Rudy has changed his college major so many times that it will take him six years to graduate. Since his parents have pointedly objected to paying the expenses for tuition and room and board, Rudy has cheerfully taken on a variety of jobs, ranging from bartender to shoe salesman. He likes work that allows him to think and be alone; his few friends are very much the same way. Rudy's grades are generally high, though his record is marred by a several “incompletes.” He has had one very satisfying intimate relationship and is searching rather anxiously for another. Rudy’s identity status would probably be described as

2. Melissa. Melissa’s parents are both physicians. In college she majored in French, spending a semester in France studying art and culture. Upon graduation she surprised her parents by announcing that she had applied to medical school. A close relationship with a hospice nurse and a summer job as a hospital volunteer had helped her arrive at the decision. Melissa’s identity status would probably be described as

3. Lynn. Lynn’s mother is a professor of women’s studies who is deeply involved in feminist issues. Lynn very much admires her mother, a strong woman who, as a single parent, struggled to provide for her daughter while establishing her own career. Lynn believes that she, too, will be a strong and independent woman. She avoids people (especially men) who either don’t see her in that light or try to bring out her feminine nature. She certainly steers clear of her
paternal grandmother, who (although pleasant) is a very disorganized and “artsy” person. Lynn’s college grades are very high, and her course selections reflect an unwavering interest in psychology, politics, and women’s studies. Lynn’s identity status would probably be described as

4. *Daniel.* Daniel is a freshman at a college near his old high school. He comes home nearly every weekend but does not enjoy himself once he’s there. He avoids talking to his parents or old high school friends, preferring to “surf the Web” on the computer in his room. Periodically he engages in impulsive shopping; after these sprees he comes home and talks excitedly about the latest electronic gadget he’s acquired. He gets angry if his parents ask what he considers to be foolish questions, and angrier still if they patronize him. Daniel is enrolled in courses he has been told are easy, and he does not have strong feelings about his studies or his grades. Daniel’s identity status would probably be described as
HANDOUT 5

Observational Activity: Adolescent Peer Relationships: Interview Questions

This activity is intended to let you explore how the concept of friendship changes during adolescence. You are to interview someone who is at least four years younger than you and is between the ages of 10 and 19. You may feel most comfortable interviewing a friend or relative, but no matter whom you interview, you must have written permission from your subject’s parent or guardian before you begin.

Keep the interview friendly and informal. It should last no more than 20 minutes, depending on your subject and how much he or she is enjoying the interview. Begin the interview by identifying yourself, your purpose (a course assignment on peer relationships during adolescence), and assuring your subject that his or her responses will remain confidential. Following is a list of questions you might ask during the interview. Feel free to add questions of your own if you wish.

1. I’d like you to tell me about the people in your group of friends. Which friends do you typically hang out with after school? Which friends do you typically hang out with on weekends? Which friends do you typically invite to your parties?
2. What makes a friend different from an acquaintance?
3. Do you define “friendship” differently now than you did when you were younger?
4. How many “true friends” do you have? How does the size of your current friendship group compare with its size when you were younger?
5. What happens when you and a friend have a fight? Is that person still your friend? How do you try to resolve the problem that caused the fight?
6. Who is the most popular person in your friendship group? What is that person like? Why do you think that person is popular?

*This activity and the suggested interview questions were taken from the following article: Schwanenflugel, P. J. (1987, October). An interview method for teaching adolescent psychology. Teaching of Psychology, 14(3), 167–168.
Observational Activity: Adolescent Peer Relationships: Follow-Up Report

After you have completed the interview, prepare a written report summarizing what you learned from your subject’s responses. Include your subject’s sex, age (but not name), and any other pertinent demographic information. Your report should focus on the extent to which your subject’s responses confirm or refute the material on peer relationships presented in the text. Feel free to offer your own interpretation of your subject’s responses, including comments on how you yourself might have answered the questions.

Subject: age ______________ ethnic/religious background ______________
        sex ______________ education level ______________
HANDOUT 7

Survey of Sexual Knowledge

Please answer true or false to each of the following questions and return this sheet to your instructor. Your answers will remain completely anonymous.

1. A female can become pregnant during sexual intercourse without the male having an orgasm.
2. The imbalance of sexual hormones is the most frequent cause of homosexuality.
3. Women can become sexually aroused when breast-feeding an infant.
4. Direct contact between the penis and clitoris is necessary to produce female orgasm during sexual intercourse.
5. There are no biological differences in orgasms attained through sexual intercourse, masturbation, or any other technique.
6. Males are unable to have an erection until they reach puberty (adolescence).
7. Women are biologically more capable of multiple orgasms than are men.
8. A hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) causes the loss of sexual desire in women.
9. There are two different types of biological orgasms in women: clitoral and vaginal.
10. The most sensitive area of sexual stimulation in most women is the clitoris.
11. Erection of the nipples is often a sign of sexual arousal in the male.
12. Homosexual behavior, masturbation, and rape occur among other species of animals besides the human species.
13. Rapists have an above-average sex drive.
14. In this culture, some homosexual behavior is often a normal part of growing up.
15. A male is not able to have an orgasm until he reaches puberty (adolescence).
16. Sexual intercourse after the first six months of pregnancy is usually dangerous to the health of the mother or the fetus.
17. Sex criminals use pornographic material more often in their youth than the average person in this culture.
18. Most prostitutes are nymphomaniacs.
19. Almost all cases of impotency are caused by psychological problems.
20. The rhythm method is just as effective as the birth control pill in preventing pregnancy.
21. Masturbation by a married person is almost always related to marriage problems.
TF 22. The castration of an adult male results in a loss of his sexual desire.
TF 23. Almost all homosexuals can be identified by their physical characteristics.
TF 24. Sexual satisfaction associated with the infliction of pain is called sadism.
TF 25. If a female does not have a hymen (maidenhead, “cherry”), she is not a virgin.
TF 26. Sexual stimulation often causes erection of the nipples of the female breasts.
TF 27. A majority of the sexual crimes committed against children are committed by adults who are friends or relatives of the victims.
TF 28. For a short period of time following orgasm, men usually are not able to respond to further stimulation.
TF 29. Frequent masturbation is one of the most common causes of premature ejaculation.
TF 30. During lovemaking, it usually takes the female less time to become sexually aroused and reach climax than it does the male.
TF 31. Circumcision makes it more difficult for a male to control ejaculation.
TF 32. Nocturnal emissions, or “wet dreams,” often are a sign of sexual problems.
TF 33. Brain damage can be one of the results of untreated syphilis.
TF 34. Certain foods have been shown to be aphrodisiacs (sexual stimulants).
TF 35. Transvestites are individuals who receive sexual pleasure from dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex.
TF 36. Young married couples who have an active sex life are more likely to maintain regular sexual activity in their old age than less sexually active couples.
TF 37. Relatively few cases of frigidity are caused by biological problems.
TF 38. Women generally enjoy rape although they are unlikely to admit it.
TF 39. It is possible to get “crabs” without having sex with anyone.
TF 40. The condom (rubber) is the most reliable birth-control method.
TF 41. A woman can get pregnant again while she is breast-feeding her baby.
TF 42. A woman’s desire for sexual activity usually shows a great decrease after the first three months of pregnancy.
TF 43. Males are capable of experiencing multiple orgasms during sexual intercourse.
TF 44. The vaginal walls secrete most of the fluid that lubricates the vagina during sexual arousal.
TF 45. There are no medical reasons why a woman cannot engage in sexual intercourse during her menstrual period.
TF 46. A female can become pregnant the first time she has sexual intercourse.
HANDOUT 7 (continued)

T  F  47. A female does not have to experience orgasm in order to become pregnant.
T  F  48. Friction along the walls of the vagina causes orgasm in the female.
T  F  49. Large breasts are more sensitive to sexual stimulation than are small breasts.
T  F  50. Large amounts of alcohol inhibit sexual performance.
T  F  51. Sexual intercourse during pregnancy is the most frequent cause of twins.
T  F  52. In studies on sexual arousal, women report being aroused by sexual material almost as frequently as men.
T  F  53. Males who expose themselves in public (exhibitionists) are seldom dangerous.
T  F  54. Castration of an adult male will cause his voice to change.
T  F  55. The larger the penis, the more the vagina is stimulated in sexual intercourse.
T  F  56. A diaphragm should remain in place for at least six hours following sexual intercourse if it is to be effective in preventing conception.
T  F  57. Douching solutions sold in stores are more effective as a contraceptive than regular water.
T  F  58. Once a person has been cured of syphilis, he or she can still catch the disease again.
T  F  59. Most cases of gonorrhea (“clap”) take several years to disappear even with medical treatment.
T  F  60. A mother with syphilis can transmit the disease to her unborn child.

Internet Activity: Internet Resources for Troubled Adolescents

The Internet contains a wealth of information for teens and their families who are struggling with serious problems such as suicidal ideation and delinquency. In this activity you are to search the Web to find and explore some of these resources. Two interesting (and, more importantly, credible) starting points are the home pages maintained by The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (www.aacap.org) and the Ignitus Worldwide (www.ignitusworldwide.org). The Academy publishes dozens of fact sheets that provide concise and up-to-date material on a variety of adolescent problems. Ignitus Worldwide is a nonprofit, youth-led organization that empowers young people to take an active role in shaping the world around them.

To start your exploration, visit these Web sites (as well as others through the numerous hyperlinks) to find answers to the following questions.

1. What percentage of all crimes in the United States are committed by teenagers?

2. How many crimes occur on school campuses each year? each day?

3. How does the prevalence of suicide among gay teenagers compare with its prevalence among heterosexual teenagers?
HANDOUT 8 (continued)

4. What are several verbal clues that are often revealed by adolescents who are contemplating suicide?

5. Give the addresses of at least two other Web sites maintained by reputable organizations that could be consulted as resources by troubled adolescents or their family members.
HANDOUT 9

Cohort Differences in Drug Use: A Questionnaire

Drug use varies from cohort to cohort. To discover the extent of recent changes, ask a high school junior or senior questions 1 through 4. Then ask the same questions of someone who has been out of high school for at least 5 years (preferably 8 to 10 years). Use the present tense when directing questions to current high school students.

1. When you were in high school, some students probably had minor problems with drugs. Perhaps these students appeared “out of it” or seemed otherwise disturbed, but they continued to come to class. What drug do you think most of these students were using?
   a. alcohol  
   b. marijuana  
   c. pills  
   d. cocaine  
   e. heroin or “hard drugs”  
   f. ecstasy  
   g. other (specify)

2. When you were in high school, some students probably had serious problems with drugs—leading to withdrawal or expulsion from school or to delinquency. What drug did you know (or suspect) that a student with serious problems had been using?
   a. alcohol  
   b. marijuana  
   c. cocaine  
   d. crack cocaine  
   e. heroin or “hard drugs”  
   f. pills (e.g., amphetamines)  
   g. LSD and other potent hallucinogens  
   h. PCP (“angel dust”)  
   i. inhalants (“glue sniffing”)  
   j. ecstasy

3. In high school you may have tried or been tempted to try a drug. Which drug did you use (or come closest to using)? What made the drug seem somewhat appealing?

4. Parents and educators who work with high school students are often very concerned about drug use. Sometimes they institute drug education programs. When you were in high school, which drug did parents seem most concerned about? Which of the drugs listed below did they seem least concerned about?
   a. alcohol  
   b. marijuana  
   c. cocaine  
   d. crack cocaine  
   e. heroin or “hard drugs”  
   f. pills (e.g., amphetamines)  
   g. LSD and other potent hallucinogens  
   h. PCP (“angel dust”)  
   i. inhalants (“glue sniffing”)  
   j. ecstasy
5. What recent changes in the pattern of drug use, if any, are suggested by the two sets of responses to your questionnaire? Can you think of any reasons for these changes?

HANDOUT 10

Internet Activity: Adolescent Drug Experimentation

To learn more about the role of biopsychosocial factors in adolescent drug experimentation, do research on the Internet to find brief answers to the following questions. Hint: One Web site you might consult is the home page of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Find them at http://store.samhsa.gov/home.

1. The National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) annually conducts a survey of students in grades 6 through 12. Consult the statistical summary of their latest study to draw a bar graph depicting the percentage of students in grades 6 through 8 who reported regular use of the following substances: nicotine, beer, wine coolers, marijuana, inhalants, cocaine, uppers, downers.

2. How do the substance use data for this latest survey compare with the data reported in 1996? What trends are noticeable for various substances?

3. What aspects of the results have led some developmentalists to conclude that adolescent drug use is increasingly not merely recreational or experimental?
4. By their report, who most often discusses the hazards of early drug use with teenagers—peers, parents, or teachers? Are sixth- to eighth-graders more likely to experiment with drugs in their home, a friend’s home, at school, or some other place?

5. What percent of twelfth-graders report using an illicit drug at least once each week? What percent report using an illicit drug daily?