



# Social influence 1: social facilitation

Module PSYB2

Section A - Social Psychology

3.2.1 social influence

## What we will be learning about

Have you ever noticed how, sometimes, having an audience can bring out the best in people? Sports professionals and musicians often say that they perform better when people are watching or playing alongside them but most of us have had experiences where the presence of other people has affected our ability to do things. This is not always for the better. Sometimes things that seemed simple when we tried them earlier become terribly difficult when others are watching. This topic is all about how our ability to do things is affected by other people. We will be learning about a process called social facilitation and trying to understand why the presence of others can affect our ability to perform for better or worse. Along the way we will learn about how psychologists conduct research into human behaviour and some of the choices they need to make when designing their studies.

## What you could be tested on

	A01 – knowledge & understanding	A02 – application, analysis & evaluation	A03 – methods, statistics & ethics (how science works)
<b>You must be able to...</b>	<b>Define</b> social facilitation, arousal, dominant response, distraction, evaluation apprehension. <b>Describe</b> factors that increase arousal including evaluation apprehension and distraction. <b>Describe</b> research studies into social facilitation including Zajonc et al (1969).	<b>Distinguish between</b> dominant and non dominant responses. <b>Analyse</b> examples to identify arousal-influencing factors. <b>Interpret</b> research findings in terms of what they tell us about social facilitation.	<b>Predict</b> the effect of various situations on dominant/non-dominant responses. <b>Identify</b> the methods and key variables in research studies of social facilitation. <b>Interpret</b> data from studies of social facilitation.
<b>You should be able to...</b>	<b>Explain</b> the effects of arousal on performance (including the Yerkes Dodson curve). <b>Describe</b> the effect of arousal on dominant and non-dominant responses.	<b>Analyse</b> descriptions of task performance in terms of arousal/response dominance. <b>Assess</b> the extent to which research findings support or challenge explanations of social facilitation.	<b>Interpret</b> the relationship between arousal and performance modeled by the Yerkes Dodson curve. <b>Assess</b> the advantages and disadvantages of laboratory and field studies of social facilitation.
<b>You could be able to...</b>	<b>Explain</b> why variations in arousal affect dominant and non-dominant responses differently.	<b>Analyse</b> own experiences in terms of social facilitation/inhibition. <b>Evaluate</b> the usefulness of social facilitation as a psychological construct.	<b>Design</b> an original study to investigate an aspect of social facilitation.