

# The Cognitive Theory of Depression



This activity will help you to:

- Consider evidence relating to the cognitive theory of depression
- Evaluate the cognitive theory of depression
- Explain and generate hypotheses from psychological theories
- Research psychological information

In order to evaluate the cognitive approach to depression, it is necessary to find the answers to three questions. Read each question, then briefly explain why the answer is important

Do depressed people think differently to clinically normal people?

Does negative thinking occur before or after the onset of symptoms?

Does changing the way a person thinks reduce their depressed mood?

According to the **treatment-aetiology fallacy**, the third question is irrelevant to evaluating the cognitive approach to depression. Explain why.

Now use the materials available to assess the validity of each of these hypotheses. Make short notes to summarise what you find out, and be ready for a Q&A/discussion session where we share what we've discovered and try to draw some conclusions.