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Psychology
Teaching with Documentary Video
Content Type

Documentary videos are of medium length (15–30 min) and a documentary film made about a topic in psychology. Examples include "The Mind’s Storehouse," "Lives in Balance," and "Age Happens." Documentary videos provide an overview of a topic in the field with case studies, examples, and interviews with experts. They can be assigned as homework to be viewed outside of the classroom or can easily be incorporated into a lecture to provide an overview of a topic. Instructors can create quizzes from videos to assess students’ knowledge. They can also serve as great launching pads for exciting classroom discussion and interesting assignments.

The Mind’s Storehouse
http://sk.sagepub.com/video/the-minds-storehouse

This documentary presents memory as the “mind’s storehouse,” highlighting the importance of memory in our everyday lives. This documentary discusses topics such as eyewitness memory; flashbulb memories; multistore model of memory; Ebbinghaus’s work; importance of meaning, organization, and context in memory; short-term and long-term memory capacity; H.M. and Clive Wearing cases of amnesia; brain areas involved in encoding and storage of memory; role of hormones in memory; explicit versus implicit memory, importance of context in memory retrieval; and implications of forgetting and false memories for eyewitness memory and repressed memories.

Suggested Courses or Topics

Course examples might include:

- cognitive psychology,
- memory,
- introductory psychology, and
- criminal justice—eyewitness testimony.

Classroom Clips

Listed below are a few examples of clips that focus on key concepts:

- Ways to help remember information. Clip 5:56 – 8:05.
- Role of hormones in memory. Clip 16:04 – 17:42.

Research Assignment

See below for an example assignment that you might use for students.

Find three research studies about memory. Connect the type of memory studied to the different kinds of memory discussed in the film.

Classroom Discussion

Here are some examples of questions which might be used for in-class discussion.

1. What are the implications of how forgetting works for how we handle cases of accusations based on repressed memories?

2. Think about different ways that you use memory in your everyday life. What kinds of memories are you using in each case?