Crazy Celebrity (Kelly Cavanaugh, North Carolina)

Ask students to think of a “ crazy celebrity,” i.e Charlie Sheen, Mike Tyson. Ask students to write down three different reasons for their thoughts and behavior. More than likely you will have six of the seven perspectives completed. Nice introduction to the perspectives

Can Science Answer these Questions/ Operational Definition?

Instructions: Can science answer these questions? Several of the following can be answered using the experimental method. If this is the case you must construct a formal hypothesis, manipulate the independent variable, identify a confounding variable a control procedure.

1. Do chocolate covered peanuts enhance memory?
2. Does a person’s favorite color determine lifestyle choices?
3. Does birth-order have an effect on intelligence?
4. Is abortion on demand bad for society?
5. Are breast fed babies more alert than bottle fed babies?
6. Does class size impact test performance?
7. Does alcohol impact human behavior?
8. Does gambling impact society?

What’s Wrong with this Experiment-You can use a 12 inch ruler and reaction time can be where the participant catches the ruler. (ZIMBARDO, 1968)

1. Propose a hypothesis-“Boys have faster reaction time than girls,”
2. Define reaction time-time interval between stimulus presentation and subject reaction’s.
3. Select a student from the “slower sex”, ask them to come to front of room with thumb and index fingers EVEN with the tip about two inches apart. Keep talking to the class and then drop the ruler without warning-the reaction time is measured in centimeters, not seconds, GIVE ONLY ONE TRIAL.
4. Bring up the other sex, have them sit down, relax and what hand they are, define the task, put the meter two inches above there instead -of even, give them two practice trials and a warning signal (READY) then give two TEST TRIALS and record only the fastest one
5. 5. ANNOUNCE YOU ARE HYPOTHESIS WAS RIGHT
6. Go through all the things wrong with the experiment (standing vs sitting, person had to use a cognitive process vs second which is only reaction time, two inches above for second person vs even with first, ect.

Scientist vs. Psychologist

Use as a bellringer, conversation starter. Write scientist on the board and have students write down any words they associate, repeat the above for Psychologists. A good way introduce psychology as a science and break some misconceptions about the goals of psychology.