LESSON 2

TITLE .......... The Individual: Perception.
CREDIT HOURS ................. 3.
TEXT ASSIGNMENT .............. Attached Program.
MATERIALS REQUIRED ........... None.
LESSON OBJECTIVE .............. To enable the student to identify and recognize those qualities of individual perceptual systems which result in perception unique to that individual.

SUGGESTIONS .............. None.

ATTACHED PROGRAM

(The attached program is approved for resident and extension course instruction only. It reflects the current thought of the School and conforms as closely as possible to Department of the Army doctrine. Development and progress render such doctrine continuously subject to change.)
1. For centuries, philosophers have argued about how we perceive the world with our various senses. Some philosophers believed that we see the world as it really is—as objective reality. Others claimed that each of us has a different representation of the world because each of us is different and has different experiences. Of these, the view that is accepted by psychologists today is that _* ___________ _

21. The major thing we can say about our perception is _* __________ __
By this we mean three things:

a. *

b. *

c. *

41. Recall that the selection of a goal to satisfy a particular need depended upon four factors. All of these influence, and are influenced by, perception. Clearly, then, our selection of goals is, to a great extent, generally dependent upon our__________________________ _
1a. *each of us has a different representation of the world

NOTE: If you answered that we see the world as it really is, you are supported by some well-known philosophers. However, psychologists have rejected this argument for the reasons set forth in the following section.

21a. *our perceptions of the world are selectively organized
   a. *we see organized objects
   b. *of all objects in the environment, we perceive only certain ones (any order)
   c. *of all characteristics of an object, we perceive only certain ones

41a. perceptions
2. Psychologists use the word "perception" to refer to the process of receiving and giving meaning to the individual sensations from the world around us. When we see a word on paper, assign a meaning to it, and "understand" it, we are using the process of perception.

22. We generally learn things through the reward (such as praise) or punishment for activities. For example, if you were punished for associating with certain kinds of people when you were a child, you would think that these people are "bad."

42. If you are hungry, you want to eat; you have to determine where and what to eat. The smell of a broiling steak may lead you to want steak at the restaurant you see across the street. Thus, the behavior you use to attain the steak is guided by your hunger.
2a. perception

22a. learn

42a. goal perceptions
3. You probably have met someone who is like the following: John wants very much to be friends with Dick, but Dick is cruel to John at all times. Because of John's desire to be friends, however, he perceives Dick as being friendly in spite of Dick's cruelty. It is apparent that John's perception of Dick is influenced by *

23. Recall that our perceptions are strongly influenced by experience and learning. Our perception of Chinese may, through reward or punishment, be as a child. However, by later association with Chinese our perceptions may change due to*

43. An African wishes to satisfy his need for power. He sees that this need can be satisfied by a number of means (goals) and, due to the opportunities available, decides to join an insurgent band. Through the observation of how others join, he decides to first contact a rebel and then slip away at night. From this, you can see that perception influences both *
3a. John's need for friendship

23a. learned experience

43a. *the selection and achievement of goals
4. Psychologists have conducted many experiments that show how our needs and goals can influence how we see things. For example, people who are very hungry will tend to see shapeless objects as food or hear all sounds as the bringing of food. Their image of the world is dominated by _____________.

24. Our perceptions do not exist in isolation. They develop into systems. Our perception of the Chinese learned as a child and our perceptions of individual Chinese will merge into a general perception of "Chinese" because individual perceptions _____________.

44. It is important to understand perception because, with respect to behavior, it determines to a large extent _____________.

69
4a. *their need for food

24a. develop into systems

44a. *the goals we set and how we achieve them
5. Just as it influences our perception of needs, our physical and social environment is a major determinant of our whole image of the world. Certainly, the raw material for our perceptions must come from our______________________________

25. When you meet a woman for the first time, you will probably perceive a number of things—blonde hair, blue eyes, fair complexion, nice figure, nice legs, etc—but you will also detect a number of things in talking—her intelligence, manner of speech, etc. Naturally, these individual perceptions will develop into a______________________________

which will influence your dealings with her.

45. How can behavior be changed? This is our main interest in psychological operations. Needs are relatively permanent, and more than one goal can satisfy a given need. Although both needs and goals determine our behavior, if we wanted to change a person’s behavior it would probably be best to try to change his______________________________.
5a. physical and social environment

25a. system of perception

45a. goals
6. As our biological capacity helps determine our goals, our physiological structure determines what and how we perceive. We see certain colors, hear certain sounds, etc., because of our_________________.

26. Our perception of other types of people is determined by what we have learned at home or in school and by our experience with them. In general, then, these individual perceptions *_________________ through the process of_________________ and_________________.

46. One way of changing behavior is to establish attractive new goals. However, in practice this is difficult, so use must be made of existing possible goals. Because goals depend upon perception, one way of getting a person to change goals is to *_________________.

73
6a. physiological structure

26a. *developed into systems
   learning
   experience  
   (any order)

46a. *change his perception of the goals
7. Because people have different degrees of color blindness, deafness, visibility, sensitivity to touch, etc., it is clear that our perceptions will differ from person to person because our ___ is ___

27. Our systems of perceptions may be called our "frame of reference." This actually determines the way each of us looks at things. Our dealings with Chinese will contribute to and be influenced by our ___

47. A farmer joins an insurgent band in order to obtain security. One general way to cause him to change his goal would be to ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___.
7a. physiological structure

different

27a. frame of reference

47a. *change his perception of the goal, specifically, make his chosen goal less attractive and alternate goals more attractive
8. Our perceptions of things are strongly influenced by learning and experience. In school, our perceptions were chiefly formed through ________, but now we develop or modify our perceptions chiefly through ____________________.

28. Our perceptions of people, society, animals, language, religion, etc., are all a part of our _____________________________.

48. Recall that perceptions of a type of people are gained from information (such as learning or experience) about them. As you would expect, changes in these perceptions might be initiated by changes in the ________ _____________________________.

77
8a. learning experience

28a. frame of reference

48a. information
9. a. We see the world in different ways because our image of the world is the product of one or more of the following factors:

   (1) physical and social environment  (3) differing needs and goals
   (2) physiological structure       (4) past experience and learning

b. Write the one factor that best accounts for each situation below:

   (1) A person who is blind has no visual perception of the world.

   (2) We understand the meaning of the symbols on a military situation map.

   (3) We generally see furniture that is actually present and listen to words that are actually spoken.

   (4) An officer has a strong need for respect. Consequently, he may perceive his fellow workers as respecting him when, in fact, they have little respect for him.

29. All individual perceptions develop into _________________ through the process of ________________ to form what is called our _________________. Clearly, all individual perceptions within a system are influenced by _____________________________.

49. We may develop a taste for a disliked food through experience with, or information about, the food. Or, if we are deprived of food for a long time, we will probably eat * to satisfy this need. Thus, changes in our perceptions may be initiated by changes in our ____________________________ or our ____________________________.
9a. 1. physiological structure
   2. past experience and learning
   3. physical and social environment
   4. differing needs and goals

29a. systems (of perceptions)
    experience and learning
    frame of reference
    *the entire system (or, our frame of reference)

49a. *anything; the disliked food
     information   }
     needs        }
     } (any order)
10. Our image of the world is the product of our:
   a. ________________________________
   b. ________________________________
   c. ________________________________
   d. ________________________________

30. You have been assigned as a psychological operator in Pineland. From what you see and what you have read, you develop a general perception of Pinelanders. The way you deal with each new Pinelander is influenced by this general perception. Based upon this and what you have learned, what can you say about perception? ________________________________

50. Strong deprivation of a need is a drastic way to cause changes in our perceptions. More commonly, small deprivations caused by the blocking of goals (i.e., frustration) may cause ________________________________.
30a. *All individual perceptions develop into systems of perceptions through experience and learning to form our frame of reference. Each individual perception is influenced by the entire system.

50a. *changes in our perception
11. Because of the large number of sensations and different perceptions we have of the world, we selectively organize them in order to deal effectively with the world. We do not see everything in our environment and we may not see things as they actually are because our perceptions are _________________.

31. In order to effectively deal with the world, we must organize our world in a manner that is meaningful to us. We develop systems of perceptions of people, religion, society, etc., in order to _________________.

In a manner that is _________________.

51. You have been assigned to work with a Pinelander to develop some PSYOP programs for his country. At first, you think your counterpart is a nice fellow—friendly and agreeable. As time goes on, however, you have trouble communicating with him; you become frustrated in your need to achieve; and you start to perceive him as hostile to you and your aims. In general terms, your perception has changed due to *___________.

______________________________.
11a. selectively organized

31a. organize words meaningful to us

51a. *failure to satisfy a need, frustration of a need

NOTE: Recall that when a need is not satisfied, its strength increases. The basis for the change in the perception is the change in the need.
12. We see Asians as different from Caucasians, we can tell the difference between modern and classical music, and we like only certain types of women because our______________________________are______________________________.

32. Our systems of perceptions, or frame of reference, guide the way we_______________________________in a manner that is______________________________.

52. Changes in our perceptions are generally initiated by______________________________in our______________________________or______________________________. However, this change is also influenced by other factors. Our personality (intellectual ability, our ability to cope with new situations, our ability to accept change) influence everything we do. Clearly, our perceptions and their change will be influenced by our______________________________factors.
12a. perceptions
   selectively organized

32a. *organize our world
    *meaningful to us

52a. changes
    information
    needs
    personality
    (any order)
13. Look at the center of the diagram for a few seconds. Do you see any pattern or designs of dots? What if any, patterns can you see? (Describe or draw them below.)

33. In psychological operations we are chiefly unconcerned with perception as it relates to other people. If we had heard that all people from Pineland had pleasant personalities and we met a man from Pineland, we would expect that he would have a _________________.

53. Joe Doe is not very smart. He barely made it through the eighth grade. Because of his parents, he perceives all Chinese as stupid. If Joe reads a complex article that proves that Chinese are intelligent, he probably would not understand the article, and consequently his perception of Chinese would (change/remain the same) _______________. In this case, a change (or lack of change) in his perception is generally influenced by * _________________.

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13a. *most people will see patterns like the following, but these are not the only ones possible:

After looking at these patterns, look back and see if you can see them in the diagram.

33a. pleasant personality

53a. remain the same

*personality factors (his intelligence)
14. When you looked at the diagram, you probably saw some pattern—you saw the points as organized in some way. In the same way, we do not see disorganized objects in our environment, we see ________________ objects.

34. Because we had heard that Pinelanders have pleasant personalities, we would initially see and deal with a Pinelander on this basis. Thus, with respect to Pinelanders, this system of perception or stereotype provides the basis for the way we *_______________________________*

54. John Ooaks has very strong opinions on everything; he resists changing when presented with new ideas. Clearly, new information (and possible frustration of some needs) would probably not influence his perceptions because of this *_______________________________*
14a. organized

34a. *see and deal with Pinelanders

54a. *personality factor (resistance to change)
15. By "objects" we refer to physical objects and also events, conditions, and relationships between them. Thus, we do not see people as just a bunch of characteristics because we tend to see __________ _

35. Our systems of perceptions provide two major services in our dealing with the world. Concerning people in general, they provide the basis for the way we *_____________________________. For ourselves, they guide the way we *_____________________________ in a manner that is *_____________________________.

55. Recall that there is interaction between our perceptual systems and that each individual perception is influenced by these ___________________. It follows, therefore, that changes in our perceptions will also be influenced by our existing_________________________.
15a. organized objects

35a. *see and deal with other people
    *organize our world
    *meaningful to us

55a. perceptual systems
    perceptual systems
16. Consider your perceptions right now. You are looking at these words, but are paying little or no attention to other elements of your environment such as a light bulb or the noise in the background. Clearly, of all the organized objects in your environment, you perceive _________________________________________________________.

36. Recall that all individual perceptions develop into, and are influenced by, systems of perceptions. These systems of perceptions, or frames of reference, are important to the psychological operator because they:

a. Provide the basis for ____________________________________________.

b. Guide the way we ________________________________________________.

56. Women and marriage may compose two systems of perceptions. As with all systems, they may or may not be closely related. Because perceptual systems influence each other, the influence of our ideas of women upon a change in our perception of marriage will depend upon how closely ______________________________________.
16a. *only certain objects

36a. a. *the way we see and deal with other people
     b. *organize our world in a way that is meaningful to us

56a. *the perceptual systems are related
17. Social situations usually consist of a large number of complicated elements. We usually see only certain elements of a social situation because ____________.

37. Why is it important to know how perceptions are developed and how they serve us? In psychological operations we are concerned with the evaluation and change of behavior. Although behavior is initially motivated by needs and given a general direction by goals, our moment to moment behavior is mostly influenced by our momentary ____________.

57. Perceptual systems may be simple or highly complex. For example, one person may view all Orientals as alike—a simple perception. Others may be more complex—they may distinguish between Orientals that are Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.; they may differentiate between Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc. Any changes in the perception of Orientals will clearly be influenced by whether the perceptual system is ____________.
17a. *we perceive only certain objects

37a. perceptions

57a. *simple or complex
18. When we watch a football game we cannot watch all the parts of
a play at once. We just see certain characteristics of the game. Thus,
not only do we perceive only certain objects but, of all the character-
istics of a given object, we perceive * ____________________________ _

38. You will not respond to a dangerous situation unless you perceive
that it is dangerous. In social relationships, a person may be bliss-
fully unaware that a "friend" is subtly criticizing him to his face.
Thus, a person's reaction to a given situation depends upon * ________

58. The degree to which perceptual systems are related and whether they
are simple or complex are major characteristics of perceptual systems.
Any changes in our perceptions will be governed in part by these
_________________________ of ___________________________.

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18a. *only certain characteristics

38a. *how or whether it is perceived

58a. characteristics
    perceptual systems
19. By saying that our perceptions of the world are selectively organized we mean three things:

   a. We perceive ________________________________.

   b. Among all objects in our environment, we perceive ________.

   c. Among all characteristics of an object, we perceive ________.

39. Two men witnessed a murder. One man said the murdered man provoked the attack. The other said the attack was entirely unprovoked. The opinion expressed by these witnesses probably differed because ________.

59. Recall that changes in our perceptions may be initiated by new ________ or changes in our _________. Recall, also, that this change is governed in part by intelligence, ability to change, flexibility, and other ________ factors, and as we have just seen, it is governed in part by the *________ factors.
19a. a. *only certain characteristics of an object
   b. *certain objects of all those present
   c. *only certain characteristics of an object

39a. *their perceptions of the situation are different

59a. information
    needs
    personality
    *characteristics of the perceptual systems
20. Read exhibits 4A & B. Recall that, by saying our perceptions are
selectively organized, we mean three things. For each situation in
exhibit 4, select the most appropriate meaning, each may be used more
than once, and write it in the corresponding blank below.

a. *

b. *

c. *

d. *

40. People will frequently act differently in the same situation because

60. Last frame--end of program.
20a.  a. We perceive only certain characteristics of an object
    b. We perceive certain objects of all those present
    c. We perceive only certain characteristics of an object
    d. We perceive organized objects

40a. their perceptions of the situation are different
Turn back to the middle row, frame 21.

Turn back to the bottom row, frame 41.
What is the major reason people differ? We have seen that people have different needs and goals, but many people in the same society have the same needs, and many of these may set the same goals. And each one of us may act differently in similar situations. So what causes the difference? Perception.

In George Orwell's book, 1984, a society was described in which uniformity was the objective of the society. Everyone will be brought up in the same way, be exposed to the same experiences, learn the same things, have the same needs, and set the same goals. Even in this society, however, people look at things in a different way: their perceptions are different. Our differences in perceptions are a major reason for human differences.

In psychological operations we are concerned with the needs and goals of the target group; but, in order to develop an effective appeal, we must know how they look at things—how they perceive their world. It would be silly to distribute written leaflets to people who cannot read. It is just as silly to direct a nationalistic appeal to people who don't know what a nation is. Leaflets condemning a proud enemy infantry battalion as a bunch of rabble would have a negative effect in trying to persuade them to defect. Digging wells and building bridges for a proud people who have pride in their own work will not produce the desired love by the villagers. A knowledge of the perceptions of these people, and how perceptions are formed and influenced, would allow the development of the most effective propaganda or activity to accomplish the mission.
1. When we meet another person for the first time we usually look to see if his uniform is neat, shoes polished, and hair cut. Is he nervous, does he look directly at you, how does he talk? We use such clues as these to try to figure out what kind of a person he is.

2. If we show a farmer a picture of a new bridge joining two fields planted in corn or rice, the farmer will be interested in the crops and will pay little or no attention to the bridge.

3. When talking or working with other people, we usually tend to classify them in some manner. For example, we may consider LT Jones as friendly and hard-working, SGT Smith as eager-to-please, and CPT Doe as ambitious.

4. We generally look at, or think of, other people as a whole, rather than as a composite of individual traits and characteristics.
EXERCISES

Requirement: In the following multiple-choice exercises, only one answer is required. Select the best answer to each exercise and fill in solidly the space under the selection on the answer sheet. If more or less than the required number are selected, no credit will be given for the solution to the exercise. Each exercise has a weight of 6.25 points.

1. When we read something and understand it, we are using the process of:
   a. Perception.
   b. Sensation.
   c. Socialization.
   d. Kinesthesis.

2. The perception of objects is likely to be based on our goals and:
   a. Stimuli.
   b. Personality.
   c. Learning.

3. Our ability to become aware, to perceive, is basically dependent upon our:
   a. Congruent structures.
   b. Social structures.
   c. Physiological structures.
   d. Experiential structures.

4. Our perceptions are formed chiefly through:
   a. Groups.
   b. Socialization.
   c. Behavior.
   d. Learning.

5. We develop our learning through:
   a. Communication.
   b. Cognition.
   c. Experience.
   d. Selection.
6. Systems of perception are our:
   b. Value systems.
   c. Realms of dissonance.
   d. All of the above.

7. People often act differently because their:
   a. Perceptions are different.
   b. Sensations are different.
   c. Motivations are different.
   d. Needs are different.

8. If we want to change a person's behavior, it would probably be best to change his:
   b. Ends.
   c. Goals.
   d. Desires.

9. Since perception is based largely on learning and experience, perceptions might be introduced by adding new:
   a. Motivation.
   b. Information.
   c. Equipment.
   d. Teachers.

10. Our intellectual ability--the ability to cope with new situations and accept change--is influenced by our:
    a. Personality.
    b. Family.
    c. Government.
    d. Politics.

11. Representing a major characteristic, perceptual systems often are:
    a. Unrelated.
    b. Unstructured.
    c. Related.
    d. Displaced.
12. For each of us, systems of perception contribute to making our world:
   a. Distracting.
   b. Congruent.
   c. Stereotyped.
   d. Meaningful.

Requirement: In the following multiple-choice exercise, two answers are required. Select the two best answers to each exercise and fill in solidly the spaces under the selections on the answer sheet. If more or less than the required number are selected, no credit will be given for the solution to the exercise.

13. As in the perception of our need, our:
   a. Economic environment affects what we perceive.
   b. Social environment affects what we perceive.
   c. Physical environment affects what we perceive.
   d. Expressive environment affects what we perceive.

14. Perceptual systems may be organized in a (an):
   a. Tangible manner.
   b. Intangible manner.
   c. Simple manner.
   d. Complex manner.