

# The House Always Wins...?

*Attribution Theory and Games*

**GAMERS**

**QUEST 6**  
**PSYCHOLOGY**

**STATE FAIR OF TEXAS**  
**CURRICULUM**

Games in the Midway are plentiful, and many wonder if there is an actual art to winning them. Some also wonder if the games are set up for players to fail! In Psychology, the Attribution Theory examines the causes of behavior, and whether those causes were driven by an internal or external force. However, perception biases can create issues in determining cause. Let's see if your ability to win a game has to do with your actual ability...or if there's an external force at play!



## During this Gamer Quest, you will:

- ★ Describe how attributes affect explanations of behavior at the Fair.
- ★ Explore the internal and external forces described in the Attribution Theory that may cause behavior at games in the Midway and determine if winning games has to do with ability or external forces
- ★ Design a multimedia presentation using information gathered on the Midway



## Learning Standards

- ★ Psychology TEKS: 13(A), 15(A), 15(B), 15(C), 15(D), 16(B)
- ★ Art TEKS: Art I: 1A, 1B
- ★ ELAR TEKS: E3(1)(A), E4(15)(D)
- ★ Career Development TEKS: PS.2A, PS.1G



## Before You Go – 15 min prep time, 45 teaching time

- ★ Discuss with students the Attribution Theory and the biases that tend to go along with Internal Attributes and External Attributes for behavior.
- ★ Ask questions such as:
  - o Do you think that behavior at the Midway games are caused by internal or external forces? Why do you think that?
  - o What do you think motivates people to try games?
  - o Are these reasons caused by their prior perceptions? How?
- ★ Have students define:
  - o The Attribution Theory
  - o Attributes (Internal/External)
  - o Perception
  - o Bias
  - o Fundamental Attribution Bias
  - o Self-Serving Bias

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## QUEST 6 PSYCHOLOGY

## STATE FAIR OF TEXAS CURRICULUM

### STATE FAIR MAP



- ★ Discuss definitions as a group
- ★ Discuss games found in the Midway at the Fair and how the Attribution Theory can be used to explain behavior
- ★ To close, explain to students that they will be determining if winning a game at the Fair is due to actual ability or external attributions. This will help them draw conclusions about their own thoughts and perceptions to explain behavior at the gaming area of the State Fair of Texas.



#### Invitation

- ★ One of the most exciting places to visit at the State Fair is the Midway gaming area! There are many different games to choose from. You will need to bring the listed materials and then follow the route to perform the tasks below at the State Fair of Texas!



#### Optional Materials to Bring

- ★ Pen or Pencil
- ★ Sketchbook
- ★ Notebook or Paper
- ★ Smartphone or Tablet



#### Plan Your Route

- ★ Enter the gaming area by Big Tex
- ★ Enter the rest of the Midway through the gaming area



#### While You're There

- ★ The objective of your visit is to explore the internal and external forces described in the Attribution Theory that may cause behavior at games in the Midway. Then, determine if winning games has to do with a person's ability or external forces. By the end of this Quest, you should have drawn a conclusion about your own interpretation of behavior based on your observations.
- ★ **THE HOUSE ALWAYS WINS...?:** Does your chance to win a game have to do with your real ability, or is it caused by external attributes? Or do you have a chance to win at all?
  - o Upon entering the Gaming area of the Midway, choose at least two games to try out yourself, or watch another person play.
  - o Document your observations to refer to later.
    - ☐ You should have a hypothesis prior to trying each game about whether the game is won from internal or external forces on the brain.
    - ☐ Try (or watch another play) each game you picked at least twice.

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★**DRAWING US IN WITH COLOR:** As you conduct your observations, pay attention to the colors of the games that fairgoers are choosing.

- Are there colors that more people seem to be drawn to?
- As you look around, are there colors that you do not see in any of the game designs?
- Make a note of the most-used colors for future reference.
- If possible, take photos of these games. If you do not have a camera available, make a sketch.



### After the Fair - 2 day project

When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will complete the following:

- ★ Using your notes from the Fair visit and notes from class, create a 5-8 slide presentation (PowerPoint/GoogleSlides/Prezi).
- ★ Include:
  - A title slide with your hypothesis on games
  - At least 3 things you noticed about the games that relate to Attribution Theory
  - Your conclusion about whether games at the Fair are won by internal or external forces (based on your perception)
  - Have fun! Try to make it creative and visually pleasing.



## ART PORTION: DRAWING US IN WITH COLOR

How does color change our perceptions of something? Does it change the way that we feel, or react to an object? There are multiple bodies of research that suggest that certain colors evoke specific emotions or reactions. For example, red and orange are often linked to anger, happiness, or excitement. The cooler colors, such as blue or green, suggest feelings of calmness and serenity.

See the main "While You're There" portion of the lesson for instructions.

### After the Fair

Now, it's time to do an experiment with color theory! Understanding color theory and the way that certain colors can evoke different emotions and reactions is an integral part of art and design. This is especially true when you are creating a product, such as a fair game, that is dependent upon being aesthetically pleasing for success.

Handwritten mathematical notes and diagrams:

- Equation:  $m_b = h_b = f_b = \sqrt{a^2 - b^2/4}$
- Equation:  $A = F \cdot S \cdot \cos d$
- Equation:  $(x^2) - (x)(x \cdot y)$
- Diagram: A coordinate plane with x and y axes. A parabola is graphed, opening upwards. A point is marked on the parabola, and a dashed line connects it to the x-axis. Another point is marked on the x-axis, and a dashed line connects it to the y-axis. The origin is labeled with a small circle.
- Other markings: A large number '2' on the left, a curved arrow pointing right, and various other symbols and numbers scattered around the diagram.

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## ENGLISH PORTION

★If you were able to take a photo of a specific game that people were drawn to, use the filters on your phone camera, digital camera, or a computer program to create multiple images of the same game, but in different colors. For example, you should have a red example, blue example, etc. For the purposes of this experiment, you should limit your color examples to 4-5.

- o If you created sketches instead, simply make a copy of your drawing and color each of those a different color.

★Now, ask your peers to choose which game they would rather play.

- o Ask them why they choose the color that they do.
- o How does that color make them feel? Does it remind them of something?

★Record their answers and see which color was chosen the most.

- o Is that the same color of the game that was most played by fairgoers?

After thinking about the observations you made at the Fair, are games won more due to external factors or internal attributes? Each of your classmates will also decide whether or not the Midway games were won based on external factors or internal attributes and the class will then separate into two teams: external factors and internal attributes. Each side will prepare their arguments and select a member responsible for delivering their argument. Although only one person will be speaking in the debate, all debate members are responsible for participating in the research, development, and presentation of the debate. The debate will take the following format:

6 minute Position Presentation - External Factors  
6 minute Position Presentation - Internal Attributes

5 minute Work Period

4 minute Rebuttal - EF  
4 minute Rebuttal - IA

3 minute Work Period

2 minute Response - EF  
2 minute Response - IA

1 minute Work Period

2 minute Position Summary - EF  
2 minute Position Summary - IA

$$(x^2) - (x)(x \times y)$$

$$A = r \cdot s \cdot \cos \alpha$$

