

Naturalistic Observation

For this assignment you will complete a **20-minute observation** of human participants in a naturalistic setting and record what you see.

YOU WILL CHOOSE YOUR OBSERVATION SITE BASED ON YOUR RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS.

This research method involves *watching and recording behaviors* in naturally occurring situations. Naturalistic observation cannot explain behaviors, but can help us understand them through descriptions gathered during observations. They are often used as a starting point for research.

Write your hypothesis here: _____

What you need to do:

1. Choose a location for your observation.
2. Spend 20 minutes observing and recording what you see.
The result of this will be your raw notes. They must include the time, date, and place of your observation AND a description of the setting. After you describe the place, you will record what you see during the 20 minute time period. Your notes should include descriptive, not evaluative language.
3. **You will then type up your raw notes to create the final product.** This should summarize the observation in a way that describes in complete, flowing sentences what you observed. Again, without using evaluative and interpretative language. **Your final product should give me (the reader) a clear picture of the scene and happenings. It should include your hypothesis.**
4. At the end of your description you need a sentence or two that summarizes what you saw and relates it to your hypothesis or research question.
5. **You will submit BOTH your raw notes and your one page typed description of your observation.**

During your observation it is important to remember that you are trying to *gather information without evaluating*.

For example, If your hypothesis is that men are more patient than women when waiting in line, and you are observing people waiting in line at Starbucks,

You could write:

A woman of about 35 years old, who is third in line, is tapping her foot and sighing. A man, about 20, who is in front of her, turns, looks at her foot, and then at her.

(This works because it is descriptive but does not evaluate or assume.)

You would not want to write:

A middle aged woman, who is third in line, is very annoyed that things are taking so long. The young man in front of her shoots her a look.

(This doesn't work because it evaluates/judges (is annoyed, shoots a look) and could be more specific in its description (young man and middle aged woman can mean very different things to different people).)

SO...

- Describe! Instead of writing that someone is angry, happy, or confused, describe how you know. What are they doing? What is their expression like?

Remember: During the observation you may only **watch and record**. **You cannot be a participant.**

This assignment is worth 40 total points and is a project grade. Assignment is due on _____

Grading Rubric:

<p>You have demonstrated a strong understanding of, and ability to conduct, this research method</p>	<p>You... provided basic information (time, date, place) stated your hypothesis at the beginning of your description clearly described the setting used descriptive (not evaluative) language to describe what you saw collected enough information to begin to answer your hypothesis summarized the findings and related to them to your research question/hypothesis.</p> <p>AND Your writing is clear and free of error</p>
<p>You have demonstrated an understanding of and ability to conduct this research method</p>	<p>You have met most of the requirements described above</p>
<p>You have demonstrated a partial understanding of this research method and how it is conducted.</p>	<p>You have partially met the requirements described above.</p>
<p>Final product does not demonstrate an understanding of naturalistic observations. Does not earn a passing grade.</p>	<p>Requirements are not met.</p>