

STORY 10

(A) Ryan had taken the morning off of work because of his doctors' appointment. However, after arriving in town early he decided to do some shopping for a few things he needed. According to the shop assistant, most people buying cycle lights usually went for one of two types. The difference had been explained to Ryan in some detail although in his mind there was very little to distinguish the two.

- "Of course the bulbs for these cost about twice the amount of the others" the assistant said pointing at the black set, "but they do last much longer".
- They're a very popular choice though and we've not had any problems with them," he added.
- "What the hell," exclaimed Ryan, "I'll take them."
- "OK," replied the assistant. "I'm guessing that you'll want us to fit them for you?"
- "Is there an extra charge for that?" asked Ryan.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ "Two pounds fifty," replied the assistant.

○ "No, don't worry," said Ryan, "I'll put them on myself."

Ryan handed over a crisp ten-pound note, put his lights in his bag and left the shop.

Twenty minutes later Ryan was sitting in the doctor's waiting room reading the paper.

○ "Ryan Stevens for Dr Hughes", the words invaded the busy yet silent waiting room. Ryan was now getting to his feet and feeling that strange self-consciousness that you get whenever your name is announced in public.

○ "So, what's wrong with you today?" asked Dr Hughes peering over her half-moon spectacles.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) Ryan proceeded to tell her about the last three months, about the problems at work, the constant bickering at home and the growing inability to get a good night's sleep.

○ "Well, I'm not sure what to suggest," said the Doctor, "perhaps a holiday is in order.

○ Improve things at home and the other problems might just sort themselves out."

○ "I'd like to," said Ryan, "it's just that things are so busy at the moment and two people

○ are already off this week and next."

○ "It's up to you," replied the Doctor. "I'm just telling you what I think would be best for your health."

○ "Yes, I understand," replied Ryan.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐

End of questionnaire. Thanks for your help

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



Social Stories Questionnaire

Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge
Department of Psychiatry, Douglas House, Trumpington Road
Cambridge, CB2 2AH, U.K.

Tel 44 (0) 1223 746062, Fax 44 (0) 1223 746033

© JL/SBC/ARC 2002

Please answer the questions below
All information will be treated with complete confidentiality

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Today's Date _____

Sex M / F _____

Contact number
or e-mail address _____

Instructions:

This booklet contains ten short stories that involve characters
saying things that could upset other characters.

Please read each of the stories and then answer the question
that appears below each section

When being given a 'Yes/No' choice you may not tick both boxes

When indicating a line please fill in the circle at the start of the
chosen line

Please try and imagine how 'an average person' would react in
each of the situations.

Please complete this questionnaire on your own and don't spend
too much time on each question.

STORY 9

(A) Bob didn't really like going to the office dinners but he made an exception on this occasion because the three people in his department had been so persistent in persuading him. He was currently trying to have a conversation with Mr Allsop from cashiers, Mr Bacon from marketing and Steve from his department. This was being made difficult by a very noisy woman in a purple dress standing behind them.

☐ "Oh my God," exclaimed Bob, "that woman has a voice like a fog horn."

☐ "You're right," added Mr Allsop.

Shortly after, Bob decided to go to the bar and get some more drinks.

As he took a large mouthful of Guinness he heard a voice to his side,

☐ "Hello, it's Bob isn't it?" said the tall man with black hair.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle

NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ☐ "Yes, that's right," replied Bob. "You're the chap who's just transferred from the Dublin office aren't you?"

☐ "Yes," replied the man, "Sean's the name. I only started with this office last week."

☐ "I went to Ireland last year you know," said Bob. "Had a wonderful couple of weeks."

☐ Everyone seems so friendly over there with all that old-world charm and the quaint little villages."

☐ "Well you never know," replied Sean, "maybe you could petition the company to have next year's conference in Dublin."

☐ "You know, I might just do that," said Bob.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle

NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ☐ "So, are you settling in ok?" asked Bob.

☐ "Yeah," replied Sean, "everyone's being fantastic."

☐ "That's great," added Bob, "we'll have to go out for a drink some time."

As Bob turned round to check on the other people from his department he overheard two women talking a little further down the bar.

☐ "You know that dress I was talking about," said one, "it's exactly the same as the one Mrs Bacon is wearing."

☐ "You mean the purple one?" replied the other.

☐ "Yes, that's the one."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle

NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 8

(A) Valerie was still settling into her new life. She had a new car, a new job and to top it all off she was living in a new country. Today, Valerie had planned to see how the countryside around her new hometown of Oxford compared with the countryside she'd left behind in New York. So, she decided to drive west and see what turned up.

'The stunning remains of a twelfth-century castle' was how the tourist booklet had described Pencorth Castle. However, standing at the entrance, Valerie was wondering whether 'stunning' was really an accurate description.

- "How much is it to get in?" She asked the man peering out from the payment kiosk.
- "Four pounds fifty for adults," replied the man, "and two pounds fifty for children," he added despite there clearly being no children in sight.
- "And apart from the Castle," Valerie added, "What else is there to see?"
- "Well my dear," the man replied, "there's a collection of brass rubbings in the cafe and some ○ arrowheads that they dug up last year on display in the information centre. Oh, and postcards in the gift shop."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ "But there are no towers or turrets hidden behind the hill is there? It's not much of a castle," said Valerie.

- "This is the site of a very old fortress madam," replied the man.
- "I see," said Valerie. "Well... OK, one adult please."

After an hour of exploration, Valerie decided to take a break and walked into one of the numerous coffee shops in Pencorth town. As she read the lunch menu she became aware of two elderly ladies ahead of her in the queue.

- "Did you say that you'd been here before?" asked one of the ladies.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ "No," replied the other, "I've been to the ruins before, years ago, but not to this café. Is it new?"

- "Not really," replied the first lady, "although these people did renovate it when they took it over three years ago."
- "Is that a terrace out there?" asked the second lady.
- "Oh yes" the first lady replied enthusiastically, "we must go and sit out there. You get a wonderful view of the castle. Well that's if there's any space out there. So often it's full of those American tourists at this time of year."
- "Let's go and see if there's a table," replied the second lady.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 1

(A) Christine had seen the advertisement on Tuesday.

'Shop assistant wanted for weekends and some evenings. Full training provided'.

So, the following morning was spent in town looking for a new dress to wear at the interview. After a quick coffee in 'Alfredo's', Christine made the decision to buy the dark blue one in 'Romanza'. It was a little overpriced but then again she could also wear it to her 50th birthday party in a few weeks. Also, as the shop assistant had said,

- "It seems to contrast with Madam's eyes so very well."
- "Do you really think so?" Christine had replied.
- "Oh yes," he added, "it highlights the blue most beautifully."

After returning to the shop and making her indulgent purchase, Christine walked to the bus station and caught the Number 7 bus home. As she got herself settled on the bus, the young conductor walked past.

- "Don't worry about showing me your O.A.P bus pass luv," said the conductor,
- "I can see you've got your hands full."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ "Just a single to Hillview Road," she replied.

- "Is it very busy in town?" the conductor asked.
- "It wasn't too bad earlier," replied Christine, "but it's getting busy now."

The following morning Christine walked into the shop, made her way towards a thirty-something-looking man standing behind one of the counters and asked to see Mrs Ross the manager.

After a few minutes, a tall woman in her late twenties emerged from behind the curtains at the side of the shop.

- "Hello, I'm Gail Ross. You wanted to see me?"
- "Yes, it's about the job in the window. Is it still available?" asked Christine.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ "Yes it is," replied Mrs Ross. "Are you inquiring for yourself or someone else?"

- "It's for me," replied Christine.
- "And have you had much experience in this area?" asked Mrs Ross.
- "Not as such," replied Christine, "but I'm willing to be fully trained."
- "I see," said Mrs Ross. "Well I'm afraid you're not really the sort of person that we're looking for. We were hoping for someone with direct experience you see."
- "Oh, I understand," replied Christine.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 2

(A) Amy had been looking forward to the fancy-dress birthday party all week. She had spent quite a lot of time, effort and money on perfecting her mermaid costume, and she was very pleased with the result.

- “Are you sure my hair looks OK?” said Amy looking at herself in the hallway mirror.
- “It looks great,” replied Fred putting on his cape and adjusting his mask. “Come on Amy, the taxi’s waiting,” he added.
- “Ok,” replied Amy, “I’m coming.”
- Fred gave the babysitter the telephone number of the house they would be at. “Just in case of an emergency,” he added before he and Amy left for the party.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) As the taxi pulled up outside No 76 Branford Street, Amy felt herself getting quite excited about the reception she would receive.

- “Just here on the left,” she said nervously.
- “No problem,” replied the driver.
- “Right, here we go,” said Amy to Fred, “I hope they appreciate all my hard work.”
- “I’m sure they’ll be amazed,” replied Fred from behind his mask.

In fact Amy was so excited that, as she got out of the taxi, she bumped into a woman walking along the pavement.

- “Oh I’m so sorry,” said Amy.
- “You should try looking where you’re going you stupid cow,” the woman replied and carried on along the pavement.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ “I said I was sorry,” Amy added but the woman carried on walking.

- “That’ll be three pounds fifty please,” said the cab driver.

After ringing the doorbell, the door was opened by their old friend Toby.

- “Hello you guys, great costumes,” said Toby. “My goodness Amy, are you expecting another one? Come on in and I’ll get you some drinks.”
- “Thanks,” they replied together. “Sorry we’re a bit late,” added Fred.
- “Oh don’t worry,” replied Toby “a lot of people haven’t arrived yet.”

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 7

(A) Linda was feeling nervous. Tonight would be the first time that her good friends Alex and Faye were going to meet her new boyfriend James. In part this nervousness was because Alex and Faye had been very keen on Roger, her last boyfriend. However, Linda had also received a phone call from her old best friend Kate, the night before.

Kate and Linda had been best friends at college. However, after Kate had been offered the job in Moscow they only kept in touch by post. This was the way it had been for the last five years but that was going to change tonight. Kate was back in London for the weekend and coming to dinner.

Just after 7pm the doorbell rang. Linda opened the door to see her old friend Kate smiling back at her.

- “Hello stranger,” said Linda giving Kate a big hug, “come on in”.
- “My goodness” said Kate, “there are a few more lines on that face than I remember.”
- “Well it has been five years,” replied Linda. “So back in the old city huh.
- What’s brought you back to London?”

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ “Oh just a meeting,” replied Kate, “budgets, figures and money stuff.”

- “I see,” replied Linda “Look do you want something to drink?”
- “The usual if you’ve got any,” said Kate smiling.

By nine o’clock, everyone had arrived and had settled in. To Linda’s relief the evening was going very well. Everyone was getting on and the meal that Alex cooked had been a great success.

- “That duck was absolutely wonderful,” James said.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ “Thank you very much,” replied Alex.

- “Thank goodness James isn’t a vegetarian,” Linda thought to herself, “I completely forgot to ask.”

Later, Faye, Kate and Linda were in the process of making the coffee when they realised that they were out of milk.

- “Sorry Roger, sorry Alex,” said Faye bringing the coffee through, “I hope you don’t mind it black.”
- “No,” they replied, “that’s fine.”

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 6

(A) For what seemed like the millionth time that day, Samantha was clearing away the remnants of a cream tea from one of the tables outside the Seaview Cafe. Whilst filling her tray Samantha noticed a couple sitting at the table nearest the seawall. As they were about to leave she decided to add their two coffee cups to her current load.

○ “Do you mind if I just take these?” she asked.

○ “No, you go ahead,” the woman replied. “Tell me,” she added, “Do you live locally?”

○ “Well, I grew up here,” said Samantha. “I’m away at University at the moment, but I come back here each year for the summer season. In fact, this is just my second day back.”

○ “Ah, then you might be able to tell us where we can find some indication of life after 10 o’clock at night in this place,” said the man.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ “Well, if its life you’re after,” Samantha said thoughtfully, “you’ve come to the wrong place. The town might be pretty but that’s only because of all the beauty-sleep it gets.”

The couple smiled but looked disappointed.

○ “You could always try Tourmouth, a couple of miles west,” added Samantha. “There are a few more pubs and clubs there.”

○ “Ok, thank you,” the couple replied.

At quarter past two (after the lunch time rush) Samantha went for a break. As she walked down the high street she began to realise how much she had missed her hometown. As she turned the corner she saw the woman who owned the bookshop.

○ “Hello Mrs Jones,” shouted Samantha.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ “Oh hello Samantha,” replied Mrs Jones. “Are you home for good or just visiting?”

○ “Just here for the summer,” Samantha replied, “I’m working back at the Seaview,” she added.

○ “How’s Mr Jones? Does he still get grumpy about all the kids reading the books and not buying them?”

○ “I’m afraid that Mr Jones died last spring Samantha,” replied Mrs Jones.

○ “I’m very sorry to hear that,” replied Samantha.

○ “That’s O.K,” said Mrs Jones. “You’ll have to stop by soon, it’ll be like old times.”

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 3

(A) Billy had moved into the new flat at the weekend. Although it was more expensive than his last place, with the extra money from his new evening job he could just about cover the rent.

During the following week he bought some new curtains, a pine coffee table and a rug to make the place feel more like home. The following weekend Keith, his best friend, came round to visit.

○ “So this is your new place, huh,” said Keith. “Very nice indeed, you must be on good money these days”.

○ “I wish,” replied Billy. “The truth is that I can only afford this place because I took on that evening job as a doorman at Mr B’s nightclub.”

○ “Ok,” said Keith, “but just think about all that fresh air you’ll get”.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ “Crikey, will you look at that rug,” exclaimed Keith, “it looks like you’ve spilt something on it. You didn’t really pay good money for that did you?”

○ “Yeah, yeah,” said Billy, “so do you want to go out to eat or shall we order something?”

○ “You decide,” replied Keith, “I’m easy.”

○ “Well,” said Billy thoughtfully, “I actually fancy a curry.”

○ “Then curry it is,” exclaimed Keith. “Shall we eat out or get a take away?”

○ “What the heck,” replied Billy, “it’s Saturday night, lets head out to eat.”

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) Ten minutes later and Billy had changed and was ready to go out. He had put on his favourite jeans and his new T-shirt with the Rat emblem on it and he felt good.

○ “Right, are you ready to head out?” said Billy.

○ “I was ready twenty minutes ago,” replied Keith.

At about 7.30pm, Billy and Keith left the flat and walked down the alleyway towards the High Street. As they turned the corner an old man bumped into Keith.

○ “Sorry about that,” said the old man, “I was miles away.”

○ “No problem,” replied Keith.

As Billy and Keith walked down the High Street they passed the Queen’s Head.

○ “Do you fancy a pint to get the appetite going?” asked Billy.

○ “What a splendid idea,” replied Keith.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 4

(A) Brian Johnson was far from impressed with his new radio. After finding two of the knobs in the bottom of the packaging box, the crack in the display panel was simply the last straw. Although he'd bought the radio two weeks earlier (just before he went on holiday) he decided to take the radio back to the shop. After all, he needed new shoes for school so he had to go into town anyway. Walking out of the third shop that was either overpriced, under-stocked or both, he heard a voice calling him.

- "Excuse me, Sir," said one of the assistants. "It is Mr Johnson isn't it?"
- "Yes, yes that's right," replied Brian.
- "It me, Amy Coggins. I used to be in your form Sir."
- "Oh yes, I remember," lied Brian. "So, how's life? You've managed to get a job I see."
- "Yes, I've been here for nearly a year now," said Amy.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) Amy then proceeded to tell Brian all about the interview and how she'd felt when she was offered the job.

- "And are you still enjoying it now?" asked Brian.
- "Oh it's not too bad," said Amy casually. "And I get a day off in the week."
- "A day off in the week eh," said Brian. "Well, you have landed on your feet."
- "Was there anything I could help you with?" asked Amy gesturing back into the shop.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ "No, that's fine thank you," replied Brian, "I was just browsing."

- "Anyway, I'd better get moving. Look after yourself Amy."
- "And you Sir," replied Amy.

Brian continued walking down the High Street until he came to the shop where he'd bought the radio.

Walking into the shop Brian saw a young lad behind the counter.

- "Hello," said Brian, "I've got a problem with this radio. Is it possible to talk to the manager, it's just that the situation is a bit complicated."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story

STORY 5

(A) Julie and Tom hadn't been away on holiday together since last May. So, when a free weekend came up they had decided to simply get in their new car, drive towards the coast and see what turned up.

Tom had just spent the last five minutes standing with the petrol pump nozzle in his new car watching the dials spin round alarmingly quickly. He wasn't exactly sure how much a full tank would cost but he decided to stop at £35.00 and then walked in to pay the woman behind the payment counter.

- "I was wondering whether you had any road maps other than these ones," he asked pointing at the display of AA road atlases.
- "That's all we do," came the reply from behind the desk.
- "It's just that we'll be spending a few days in this area and I wanted something with a bit more detail," explained Tom.
- "That's all we do...sorry," was the only information offered.
- "Oh well," replied Tom, "pump number one please."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(B) ○ "That's thirty-five pounds please. Do you need a receipt?" droned the woman.

- "No thank you," replied Tom. "Isn't petrol getting ridiculously expensive these days?" he added.

○ "Oh I know," said the woman handing his credit card back to him.

After another forty minutes driving they pulled up at a farmhouse that displayed a Bed & Breakfast sign.

○ "Well this place looks OK," said Julie, "Let's go and see how much it is"

After ringing the bell the door was opened by a middle-aged woman in a blue dress.

- "Hello, can I help you?" she asked.

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next section

(C) ○ "Yes," said Julie, "we were wondering if you have any vacancies at the moment?"

○ "Well my dear," the woman said thoughtfully, "I've got a double room over looking the meadow and that would be £50.00 for the two of you".

○ "Perhaps the room around the side would be closer to your price range though. Breakfast starts at 7.30 and you need to clear your room by 11.00."

○ "Right," replied Julie. "Is it OK if we have a look at the rooms first?"

- "No problem my dear," said the woman "come on in."

Q. Was anything said in the previous section that could have upset someone?

- YES ☐ If yes, indicate what line it occurred in by filling in the circle
- NO ☐ If no, please proceed to the next story