



# Exploring Leadership

## SOCIAL AWARENESS: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

IQ (Intelligence Quotient) measures cognitive skills like logic, reasoning, and problem-solving. While a high IQ was once thought to be the key to success, research now shows that emotional intelligence plays a much greater role in shaping future opportunities and accomplishments. No matter how smart you are, achieving success can be challenging if you struggle to understand and connect with others.

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Have you ever spoken to a parent who knew something was wrong without you saying a word? This ability to sense feelings is a key part of Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional intelligence measures a different type of intelligence than IQ. Emotional intelligence, is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions while also recognizing, understanding, and influencing the emotions of others. For emotional intelligence to grow, it needs an environment built on respect and empathy.

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Define and illustrate emotional intelligence, showing how it differs from IQ.
- Use emotional intelligence to understand an abstract, silent scene.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Computer/projector to show "The Heider-Simmel Illusion" video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FIEZXUM2I> (1:25 minutes)

## EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

This activity will challenge you to use emotional intelligence to understand a story without words, sharpening your empathy and awareness.

- We are going to watch a short, silent video with no people or captions. By using your emotional intelligence, you'll still be able to understand the story being told.
- Pay close attention so you can share your interpretation.
- Together, watch "The Heider-Simmel Illusion" (link in "What You'll Need").
- As a class, with a partner, or in a small group, discuss:
  - Can you summarize the story of the video in a few sentences?
  - What type of character is the big triangle?
  - What type of character is the little triangle?
  - What type of character is the circle?
- Watch the video a second time to see if you notice anything new.

## FACILITATION TIPS:

- The Heider-Simmel Illusion is available on many websites, and there's no 'correct' interpretation. We each create our own stories based on our emotional intelligence, interpreting what we see through our emotions and experiences.
- Depending on group size, consider breaking into pairs or smaller teams.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Invite some participants to share what they learned about emotional intelligence.
- How would you rate your own emotional intelligence?
- What emotions did you see in each of the “characters”? How did you identify them?
- How was your interpretation of the video similar to others’?
- How was your interpretation different from others’?

## APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- When do you need to be aware of your own emotions in real life? What makes that awareness important?
- In what situations do you need to recognize others’ emotions? Why does that matter?



## CONCLUSION:

The top skills employers seek are rooted in emotional intelligence: recognizing our own and others’ emotions, and using that awareness to manage behavior and relationships effectively. Emotional Intelligence is essential for strong teamwork.

Emotional intelligence is often more influential than IQ in determining leadership potential. Strong emotional intelligence improves wellness, performance, memory, optimism, and relationships. Investing in your emotional intelligence truly pays off!

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## REFERENCES

- The Heider-Simmel Illusion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FIEZXMUM2I> (1:24 minutes)
- Heider and Simmel <https://sites.google.com/view/botslikeyou/emotional-bots/heider-and-simmel>
- Institute for Social and Emotional Intelligence <https://isei.com/>