

UNIT 1

Unit 1, Sociology, The Q Classroom

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Teacher: OK everyone, let's start. Every Unit in Q begins with a question. As we go through the Unit, we will continue to discuss this question. Our answers may change as we explore the topic, or they may stay the same. The Unit Question for Unit 1 is "Are first impressions accurate?" So let's think about our first impressions of people in this class. Look around the room at your classmates. Who made a good first impression on you? Yuna?

Yuna: Sophy.

Teacher: Why did she make a good first impression on you?

Yuna: Well, she's always smiling. She looks friendly.

Teacher: And is she friendly?

Yuna: Yes, she is!

Teacher: So that's an accurate first impression. Do you think first impressions are always that accurate? Marcus, what do you think?

Marcus: No, I don't think so. Sometimes you might think someone is unfriendly, but they're just in a bad mood that day.

Teacher: Good point. Maybe someone can give you the wrong impression because they are having a bad day. What else might cause the wrong first impression? Sophy?

Sophy: Mmm. A person might be dressed differently than they usually dress. If someone met me on the way home from the gym, they wouldn't know that I'm usually very formal.

Teacher: OK, so your mood and the way you are dressed can lead to wrong first impressions. What do you think about this, Felix? Are first impressions usually accurate?

Felix: I think most of the time they are right in some way. I can usually tell right away if someone is friendly or quiet or if they're smart or funny. But I can't tell other things about a person, like if they're honest or what kinds of things they believe in.

Teacher: Interesting.

Unit 1, Listening 1, Activity A, D

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Speaker: First impressions don't tell the whole story. Good morning. Thank you so much for inviting me here today. As promised, I'm going to talk about how we **form first impressions** and how they work. We all form impressions of other people every day. So picture this: you're waiting in line at your favorite coffee shop. The line is long, but it's moving quickly. The person in front of you in line is complaining about the wait. He's loud and rude. He makes comments about

the service and the employees. When he finally gets to the counter, he yells at the person who takes his order. You **assume** “This is not a nice person,” and you hope you never meet him again.

From this short **encounter**, you have formed an impression of this person. You were with him only **briefly**, but you may think you know a lot about him. One mistake people often make in forming first impressions is to think that a small example of someone’s **behavior** can give us a complete picture of the person. If you see a friendly, smiling young woman taking your order at the coffee shop, you may think she is friendly and smiling all of the time.

In addition to thinking she is always friendly, you may also think she has other **positive traits**. This is the second error people often make. Because she is friendly, you assume that she is also intelligent, happy, and good to her parents. Of course, the opposite is also true. The rude customer in front of you in the coffee line did not make a good impression on you. You saw an example of his poor behavior, his rudeness, and you assumed he had other **negative traits**. You thought “This is not a nice person.”

OK, so if our first impression of someone is positive, we think the person is always that way and we think that all of her traits are positive. We think that small **sample** of behavior shows us her true personality. But we don’t think that way about our own behavior. Let me explain what I mean. When we see someone else acting in a negative way, we think it is because he is a negative person. But when we act in a negative way, we say it is because of the situation.

Let’s go back to the coffee shop again. If I am rude to the person taking my coffee order, I will find reasons for my bad behavior—the service is too slow, my mother is very sick, or my boss just yelled at me. In other words, when I act badly, I think it’s because of the situation, not because I am a bad person. But if another customer is rude, I don’t look for reasons—I think it is his personality. In other words, he acted badly because he is not a nice person.

First impressions can tell us a lot. They help us make sense of new information, and form relationships with new people. But, as you can see, we can make **errors**, so sometimes we need to take a second look.

Unit 1, Listening Skill, Example

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When I first met my professor, he shook my hand firmly and then asked me questions about myself. He was very polite. He also was relaxed and seemed interested in what I was saying.

Unit 1, Listening Skill, Activity A
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I remember the first time I met Lee. It was the first day of classes my freshman year. I was on my way to my history class and had no idea where I was going. He smiled and asked me if I needed help. I must have looked really lost! Anyway, he gave me directions to the building where my history class was, which I don't think I would have found on my own. After he gave me directions he introduced himself and gave me a firm handshake. He wished me luck with my classes and then headed off across campus. So, he was probably late for his own class. My first couple of weeks of college were pretty difficult and lonely. I remember hoping I would see Lee again on my way to classes. About a month or so later, I did. I was eating lunch in the cafeteria. I waved to him and asked him to sit at my table with me and a couple of my new friends.

Unit 1, Listening Skill, Activity C
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When I first met Lee, I knew instantly he was the type of person I could be friends with. He was so friendly. I mean, I couldn't believe he made himself late for class to help me, a freshman he didn't even know. The fact that he helped me and made me feel welcome made a really great first impression on me. We've been good friends ever since.

Unit 1, Listening 2, Activity A, D
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Host: There is a saying: "Don't judge a book by its cover." This tells us that first impressions may be wrong. Writer Malcolm Gladwell has a different idea. In *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, Malcolm Gladwell argues that first impressions are usually **reliable**. This is Wednesday Book Talk. Here's critic, Hannah Smith.

Hannah Smith: An **expert** in a museum takes one look at a very old artifact. He is **suspicious**. The museum has just paid millions for this artifact. The first word that he thinks of is "fresh." According to *Blink*, a new book by Malcolm Gladwell, whenever this expert takes a look at something new, he writes down the first word he thinks of. This habit of writing down first impressions supports the argument of Malcolm Gladwell's book. We often know more than we think we know. And we know it faster than we can explain. That artifact, for example, turned out to be about 2,000 years "fresher," or newer, than the museum thought. It wasn't really an old artifact at all. It was a **fake**. Gladwell says we have two ways we make decisions. First, we can make decisions slowly and carefully with our **conscious** minds. Or, we can make decisions very quickly and **unconsciously**, or without even thinking. Our unconscious minds

are using information we already know to make judgments within a second or two.

Gladwell's book looks at examples of when our first impressions turn out to be very accurate, as well as when they do not. For example, students in college classrooms have very accurate first impressions of instructors. In one study, students were shown only several seconds of a videotape of a teacher in the classroom. Then they predicted how **effective** the teacher would be. After only that quick first impression, they judged the teacher's effectiveness very accurately. They did as well as other students did after an entire term. In another study, people could tell a lot about a student's character just by looking at his or her bedroom for a few minutes.

Gladwell also looks at marriages, wars, marketing, and police actions. Sometimes, our first impression, our ability to make **snap judgments**, is very accurate. Sometimes it is very wrong. So when should we trust our **instincts**? In a section added to the new edition, Gladwell writes about some recent research. This research suggests conscious, careful decision-making works best for easy choices like buying a pot for the kitchen. However, our first impressions are best in difficult situations when we are handling many pieces of information. An example is when a coach is **selecting** a player for a soccer team. If you want a book that gets you thinking about how we think, read *Blink*.

Host: Thank you, Hannah. Now stay with us, we'll be back after the break with news of two more titles that have just reached the stores.

Unit 1, Pronunciation, Examples

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A: She's eating now.

B: They're watching TV.

A: Lisa's already left.

B: We've finished our work.

A: What's it cost?

B: Where'd you go?

A: Why'd he arrive so late?

Unit 1, Pronunciation, Activity A

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1. Who's your favorite author?
2. Where'd you go on your last vacation?
3. Mary's going to the store.
4. Jack's gone already.

Q2e Listening & Speaking 3: Audio Script

5. We've usually eaten by 6:00.
6. What'd you do after class yesterday?
7. The girls've been here before.

Unit 1, Speaking Skill, Examples
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A: What do you think?

B: Do you agree?

A: Right?

B: How about you?

A: You know?

B: Okay?