Background

The term “herd behavior” comes from the behavior of animals in herds, particularly when they are in a dangerous situation such as escaping a predator. All of the animals band closely together in a group and, in panic mode, move together as a unit. It is very unusual for a member of the herd to stray from the movement of the unit.

The term also applies to human behavior, and it usually describes large numbers of people acting the same way at the same time. It often has a connotation of irrationality, as people’s actions are driven by emotion rather than by thinking through a situation. Human herd behavior can be observed at large-scale demonstrations, riots, strikes, religious gatherings, sports events, and outbreaks of mob violence. When herd behavior sets in, an individual person’s judgment and opinion-forming process shut down as he or she automatically follows the group’s movement and behavior.

Examples of Herd Behavior

Herd behavior in humans is frequently observed at times of danger and panic; for example, a fire in a building often causes herd behavior, with people often suspending their individual reasoning and fleeing together in a pack. People in a crisis that requires escape will attempt to move faster than normal, copy the actions of others, interact physically with each other, and ignore alternative strategies in favor of following the mass escape trend.

Another commonly cited example of human herd behavior is the phenomenon of stock market bubbles. Large stock market trends often begin and end with a mass frenzy of buying (bubbles) or selling (crashes). Many observers see these stock market trends as examples of herding behavior because individuals are driven by emotion rather than reason to “join the crowd”; greed drives mass buying frenzies, and fear drives crashes.
1. **Connotation (noun)**: an idea or quality that a word expresses in addition to its meaning
Behavior in Crowds

A more obvious example of human herd behavior occurs in dense public crowds or mobs. Crowds that gather because of a grievance or protest can involve herding behavior that becomes violent, especially if confronted by an opposing racial or ethnic group. The Los Angeles Riots of 1992, New York Draft Riots, and Tulsa Race Riot are infamous examples of herding behavior that turned violent. Psychologists posit that a “group mind” can overtake a mob and embolden people to act in ways they would not individually, increasing the likelihood that situations become violent.

Sporting events can also create herd behavior on a violent scale. The football hooliganism prevalent in Europe in the 1980s is a well-known example of sports-related herding behavior and violence. Overzealous fans of football teams often engaged in unruly or destructive behavior in the name of supporting their team and intimidating the rival team, to the extent that people involved could be badly injured or even killed.

Some historians believe that Adolf Hitler purposefully took advantage of herd behavior psychology by planting a significant number of undercover German officers in the crowds at his speeches. These officers would enthusiastically cheer for Hitler, and the rest of the crowd followed suit, making it seem as if the entire crowd supported Hitler. These speeches would then be broadcast to a larger public audience, magnifying the effect.

Everyday Decision-Making

Herd behavior does not always have such harmful effects; it can be influential in people’s everyday, simple decisions. For example, suppose that a family is walking down the street looking for a restaurant to have dinner. If they pass a restaurant that is empty and one that is relatively crowded with patrons, they are far more likely to choose the crowded one, on the assumption that it’s better because there are more people there. Herding can be subtle in this way; it simply involves people’s tendency to follow a crowd rather than carve out an individual path in many situations.

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2. The Los Angeles Riots began on April 29, 1992, after a jury acquitted four officers of the L.A. police department of assault and the use of excessive force — despite having been caught on tape beating a man named Rodney King. The riots continued for six days, resulting in the deaths of 55 people, along with 2,000 people injured.
3. The New York City Draft Riots (July 13-16, 1863) took place following new laws passed by Congress to draft men into the American Civil War. About 119 victims died during these riots, many of whom were black people targeted as scapegoats. The riots are considered one of the largest civil racial insurrections in U.S. history.
4. The Tulsa Race Riot was a racially motivated incident in which a large group of white people attacked the black community of Tulsa, Oklahoma, on May 31 and June 1, 1921. The massacre resulted in numerous fatalities (the exact count varying from 36 to 300) and the destruction of over 1000 homes, hundreds of businesses, and two black hospitals.
1. The text uses all of the following features EXCEPT for _____
   A. Footnotes
   B. Subheadings
   C. Images
   D. Graphs

2. What is the purpose of the footnote (number) ?
   A. Present a counter argument
   B. Entertain the reader
   C. Clarify a term or phrase outside of the text
   D. to tell the reader the page number

3. What is the purpose of the subheading (sub heading title)?
   A. To make an arguable claim
   B. To present the topic of a section
   C. To summarize the entire text
   D. To provide evidence to the text

4. How does the image in this article assist the reader’s understanding?
   A. This provides no assistance to the reader
   B. The image is a diversion from the text
   C. To present the overall outline of the text
   D. To assist the reader in understanding by providing a visual

5. How does the title help inform the reader?
   A. The title summarizes the main idea or ideas
   B. To assist the reader in understanding by providing a visual
   C. To present the overall outline of the text
   D. Clarify a term or phrase outside of the text

**PART 2: IDENTIFYING TEXT STRUCTURE. Read the passages and select the text structure used for each passage. Some may be used more than once.**

6. French fries, potato chips, and fried chicken are not nutritious foods. In fact, people should limit the number of fried foods they eat. There are many health risks that can be linked to eating foods fried in oil. One well-known side effect is obesity. People who eat fried foods often tend to be overweight. Eating fried foods also increases the chance of gas, heartburn, and bloating. Eating fried foods can result in higher levels of cholesterol, which can result in a heart attack. Clearly, there are many negative effects which can be associated with eating large amounts of fried foods.
   A. Problem and Solution
   B. Cause and Effect
   C. Sequence
   D. Description

7. When you open a supermarket freezer, you can immediately see how many French fry varieties are available to consumers. Homestyle fries usually have straight edges, while crinkle-cut fries have rippled
edges. Waffle fries tend to be round with a criss-cross waffle-like pattern in the middle. Steak fries tend to be straight with a wider cut. Curly fries are spiral ringlets of potato. Regardless of their cut, French fries are close to the top of the list when it comes to favorite American foods.

A. Sequence
B. Compare and Contrast
C. Description
D. Cause and Effect

8. In the 1990s, McDonalds and other fast food restaurants started getting publicity for the amount of fat in their kids’ meals. At that time, one hamburger Happy Meal contained about 70% of the recommended daily fat allowance for children. Greasy French fries account for most of the fat in the meal. A public outcry caused most fast food restaurants to re-view their kids’ meal offerings. McDonald’s solved the problem by offering healthy apple slices in place of the greasy fries. Now, a Happy Meal consisting of a hamburger, apples, and milk contain about 35% of a child’s recommended daily fat allowance.

A. Chronological
B. Sequence
C. Problem and Solution
D. Description

9. French fries were not invented in the U.S., but Americans still adore them. The first documented use in the United States was when then-President Thomas Jefferson asked a French chef to make “potatoes served in the French manner”. A recipe for “French Fried Potatoes” has been found in a cookbook from the 1850s. They were referred to as “French fried potatoes” until the 1930s, when Americans dropped the word “potatoes” and started referring to them as simply French fries. They gained in popularity with the growth of the fast food chains that took America by storm in the 1950s and 1960s. Today, they are as popular as ever!

A. Cause and Effect
B. Compare and Contrast
C. Sequence
D. Chronological

10. Wildfires can cause the destruction of beautiful trees and forests. Nonetheless, there are several benefits to wildfires. Some trees can only reproduce after a fire. Certain pine tree cones are sealed with something called pitch. A pinecone’s seeds can only be released after a fire has melted away the pitch. Aspen and birch tree seeds will also only sprout roots following a fire. Also, ash remaining after a fire adds nutrients to the soil. Deer and other animals feed on new grasses and shrubs that grow after forest fires. These are a few of the benefits of a wildfire.

A. Cause and Effect
B. Problem and Solution
C. Description
D. Sequence

11. At first glance, wildfires and prescribed fires look the same. Both fires produce hot flames and
smoke that can be seen for quite a distance. A closer look, however, reveals that these two types of fires are vastly different. While most wildfires are caused accidentally by humans, a prescribed fire is purposely started by humans only after careful planning. During a prescribed fire, weather conditions are closely monitored and the fire is under control at all times. In contrast, wildfires are not under human control, and can spread rapidly, resulting in property destruction and death.

A. Description  
B. Compare and Contrast  
C. Sequence  
D. Problem and Solution

12. Most wildfires are caused by humans. People who live in or near the woods in fire-prone areas should follow certain guidelines to help prevent the spread of wildfires. First, homeowners should use non-flammable roof and deck materials on their homes. They should trim their trees regularly. There should be at least a five foot opening between neighboring trees. Further, there should be no tree limbs within ten feet of the ground. This will reduce the chance that flames will travel to the top of the trees. Finally, homeowners should keep the lawn well-watered and cut short.

A. Cause and Effect  
B. Compare and Contrast  
C. Problem and Solution  
D. Sequence

13. Today in cooking class we are going to learn how to make an easy family dinner. First, let’s preheat the oven. It needs to be nice and hot when the meatballs go in. Now let’s mix the meat, egg, and vegetables. Add salt and pepper and shape the mixture into balls. Put each into a muffin tin. Bake for 40 minutes.

A. Sequence  
B. Description  
C. Cause and Effect  
D. Chronological

PART 3: DEFINITIONS. Read the question and choose the best answer.

14. Which text structure highlights what two things have in common and what is different about them?

A. Problem and Solution  
B. Cause and Effect  
C. Compare and Contrast  
D. Description

15. Which text structure describes a topic and its characteristics?

A. Sequence  
B. Description  
C. Compare and Contrast  
D. Cause and Effect
16. Which text structure contains dates?
   A. Chronological
   B. Sequence
   C. Cause and Effect
   D. Problem and Solution

17. Which text structure contains words like, “Next,” “Second,” and “Then”?
   A. Problem and Solution
   B. Cause and Effect
   C. Chronological
   D. Sequence

18. Which text structure contains phrases and words like, “As a result,” “Due to,” and “Since”?
   A. Problem and Solution
   B. Cause and Effect
   C. Compare and Contrast
   D. Description

19. Which text structure contains words like, “Question,” and “Solved”?
   A. Sequence
   B. Cause and Effect
   C. Problem and Solution
   D. Description

20. What is Description also known as?
    A. Chronological
    B. Main Idea
    C. Spatial
    D. Temporal