

# Laboratory Activity 7-1

## Too Close for Comfort

Over time most people develop a feeling about how close they want to be to other people in certain circumstances. This is your personal space.

### Forming a Hypothesis

- The following experiment is designed to test the limits of personal space. Read the description of the experiment below then form a hypothesis about the experiment. Write your hypothesis in the space provided.

Hypothesis: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Materials Needed

- 10' x 10' of open floor space
- flexible non-metal tape measure

### Procedure

1. Choose a partner to help you with this activity. Your partner will need to be available for interaction with each participant. Select three members of your class to be participants in this experiment. The first participant will be called Participant A. The second participant will be called Participant B. The third participant will be called Participant C.
2. Ask your partner to stand in the middle of the open floor space in a comfortable position. Your partner's arms should NOT be folded in front of his or her chest.
3. While out of hearing range of the other participants, ask Participant A to follow these instructions: *Please face (use your partner's name) and walk toward him or her. Stop when you feel you are getting too close for comfort.*
4. Measure the distance, in inches, between the toe of the participant's shoe and the toe of the shoe of your partner. (Measure between the feet that are closest together.)
5. Record the measurement and the participant's gender.
6. Next, give Participant A the following instructions: *Please move to the side and stand next to (use your partner's name). Stop when you feel you are getting too close for comfort.*
7. Measure the distance, in inches, between the participant's shoulder and your accomplice's shoulder. (If there is a significant difference in height, use the measure between the shoulder of the shorter person and the upper arm of the taller person.)
8. Record the measurement and the participant's gender.
9. Repeat Steps 3 through 8 for each of the remaining participants.

### Observations and Data

Directions: Record the following observations in the space provided.

1. Indicate the gender of your partner.       Female       Male
2. Indicate the gender of Participant A.       Female       Male

3. What was the distance between Participant A and your partner when they were:  
Face to face? \_\_\_\_\_ inches      Side by side? \_\_\_\_\_ inches
4. Indicate the gender of Participant B.       Female       Male
5. What was the distance between Participant B and your partner when they were:  
Face to face? \_\_\_\_\_ inches      Side by side? \_\_\_\_\_ inches
6. Indicate the gender of Participant C.       Female       Male
7. What was the distance between Participant C and your partner when they were:  
Face to face? \_\_\_\_\_ inches      Side by side? \_\_\_\_\_ inches

### ● Analyzing the Results

Directions: Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Describe the relationship between the face-to-face distance and the side-by-side distance for each participant using the categories listed below.  

A: face-to-face > side-by-side	face-to-face < side-by-side	face-to-face = side-by-side
B: face-to-face > side-by-side	face-to-face < side-by-side	face-to-face = side-by-side
C: face-to-face > side-by-side	face-to-face < side-by-side	face-to-face = side-by-side
2. How can you explain any patterns that you see in your data?
3. How can this concept be applied in daily life? Give examples.

### ● Assessing the Experiment

Directions: Answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. What other methods could you use to study personal space?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What suggestions do you have to refine this lab activity or expand it to acquire new or more detailed knowledge on the topic?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Recall the hypothesis you formed at the beginning of this experiment. Did your results confirm or contradict your hypothesis? Explain.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_