**Traps & Errors in Thinking and Problem Solving - AP Psychology**

**Directions** – Each example relates to a Trap/Error in Thinking and Problem Solving. Read the example and identify the trap/error using the bank below.

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| functional fixedness confirmation bias the representativeness heuristic hindsight bias  the effect of framing on decisions   the self-serving bias  belief perseverance the availability heuristic |

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Tom needs to drive a nail into a wall so he can hang a framed photo. Unable to find a hammer, Tom spends a significant amount of time searching his house to find the missing tool. His friend, Connor, comes over and suggests using a metal wrench instead to pound the nail into the wall. Why didn't Tom think of using the metal wrench?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*When asked “About how fast were the cars going when they (smashed / collided / bumped / hit / contacted) each other?”, participants who were asked the “smashed” question thought the cars were going faster than those who were asked the “hit” question. The participants in the “smashed” condition reported the highest speed estimate (40.8 mph), followed by “collided” (39.3 mph), “bumped” (38.1 mph), “hit” (34 mph), and “contacted” (31.8 mph) in descending order.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*On the evening of an important World Series game, your friend predicts that the Red Sox are going to win by a large margin. In fact, the Red Sox do end up winning the game, causing your friend to boast "I predicted it!"*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*A job applicant believes he’s been hired because of his achievements, qualifications, and excellent interview. For a previous job-opening he didn’t receive an offer for, he says the interviewer didn’t like him.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Sally is in support of gun control. She seeks out news stories and opinion pieces that reaffirm the need for limitations on gun ownership. When she hears stories about shootings in the media, she interprets them in a way that supports her existing beliefs. Henry, on the other hand, is adamantly opposed to gun control. He seeks out news sources that are aligned with his position. When he comes across news stories about shootings, he interprets them in a way that supports his current point of view. These two people have very different opinions on the same subject and their interpretations are based on their beliefs. Even if they read the same story, their bias tends to shape the way they perceive the details*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Your friend has been dating a guy who treats her very badly, and while everyone around her can see this and have been telling her the same, she simply refuses to break up with him because she believes he loves her too, and he will change.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*After seeing news reports about people losing their jobs, you might start to believe that you are in danger of being laid-off. You start lying awake in bed each night worrying that you are about to be fired.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Sarah loves to listen to New Age music and faithfully reads her horoscope each day. In her spare time, she enjoys aromatherapy and attending a local spirituality group. Based on the description above, is Sarah more likely to be a school teacher or a holistic healer? Many people would identify her as a holistic healer*