AP PSYCHOLOGY | UNIT 4

TOPIC 4.7

Emotion

Emotion is an affective process shaped by body responses, cognitive appraisal, context, expression, and culture.



THE EMOTION SYSTEM

EXPERIENCE

physiological arousal and affect

INTERPRET

cognitive appraisal and emotional label

EXPRESS

faces, actions, and culturally shaped display

BY THE END, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO...

1. Compare different timing patterns for body response, appraisal, and emotion.
2. Explain facial feedback and broaden-and-build theory carefully.
3. Explain universality, elicitors, display rules, and cultural variation.

BIG IDEA

Separate emotional experience from emotional expression. The feeling inside and the behavior shown outside are related, but culture and context can make them differ.

1 How emotion unfolds

Theories differ mainly in the timing and role of physiological arousal, conscious feeling, and cognitive appraisal.

THREE TIMING PATTERNS

SEQUENCE

STIMULUS → BODY RESPONSE → EMOTION

SIMULTANEOUS

STIMULUS → BODY + FEELING → TOGETHER

COGNITIVE LABEL

BODY RESPONSE → APPRAISAL → EMOTION

AFFECT Emotion or affect is not the same as reasoning or stored knowledge, even though cognition can shape emotional experience.

FACIAL FEEDBACK

HYPOTHESIS

A facial expression may feed back and influence the emotion a person experiences.

EVIDENCE

Research findings are mixed, so avoid claiming that expression always determines feeling.

BROADEN-AND-BUILD

POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Broaden awareness and encourage new thoughts, actions, and resources.

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Tend to narrow attention and action toward an immediate challenge.

Timing matters: identify what happens to the body, what is appraised, and when the feeling appears.

2 Expression and culture

Some emotions may be widely recognized, but culture and social position can shape triggers, display, and interpretation.

SIX COMMONLY STUDIED EMOTIONS

ANGER
threat or frustration

DISGUST
aversion

SADNESS
loss

HAPPINESS
pleasure or satisfaction

SURPRISE
unexpected event

FEAR
threat or danger

UNIVERSALITY Some expressions appear across cultures, but findings are mixed; common does not mean identical in every culture or situation.

TRIGGER VS DISPLAY

ELICITOR
An event or cue that triggers an emotional response.

DISPLAY RULE
A cultural expectation for when and how emotion should be shown.

WHAT SHAPES EXPRESSION AND INTERPRETATION?

- CULTURE
- GENDER
- AGE
- SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS

EXPERIENCE internal feeling **EXPRESSION** outward display

They can differ: a person may feel one emotion while social rules shape what others can observe.