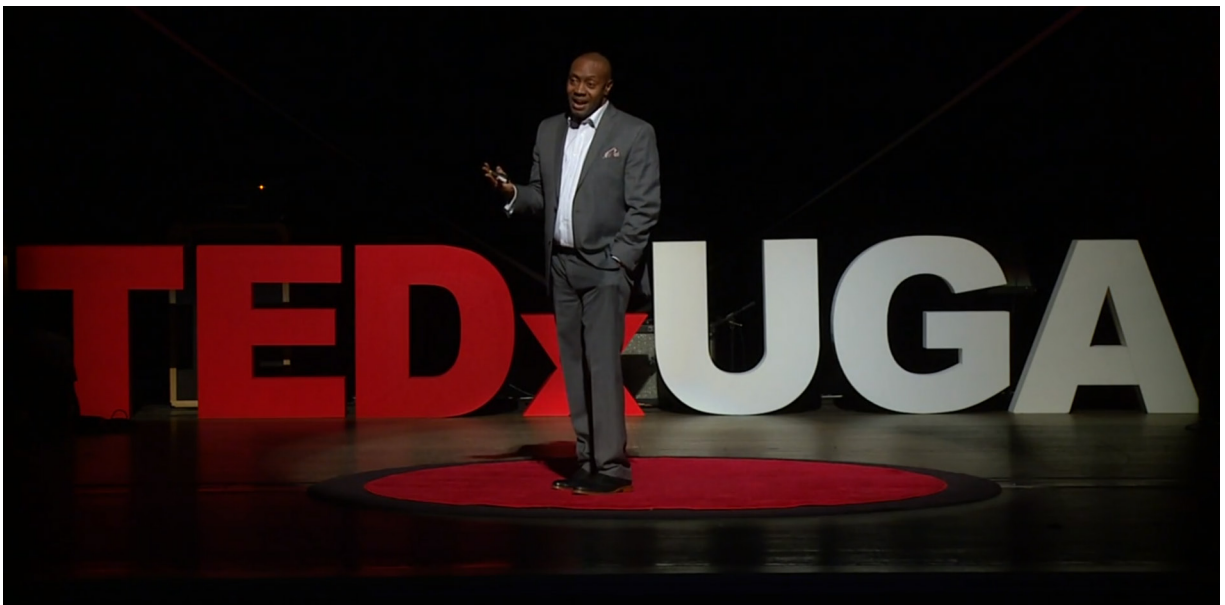


TED Connection: Three Kinds of Bias That Shape Your Worldview

Overview

Mensa for Kids' TED Connections are short, easy to use guides that help teachers, parents and youth use TED talks in a classroom or home setting. Rather than a lesson plan format, they have a list of discussion questions, all at higher levels of thinking.



Meteorologist **Dr. Marshall Shepherd** explores how we can “expand our radius” and avoid three of the major types of bias that can shape your world view.

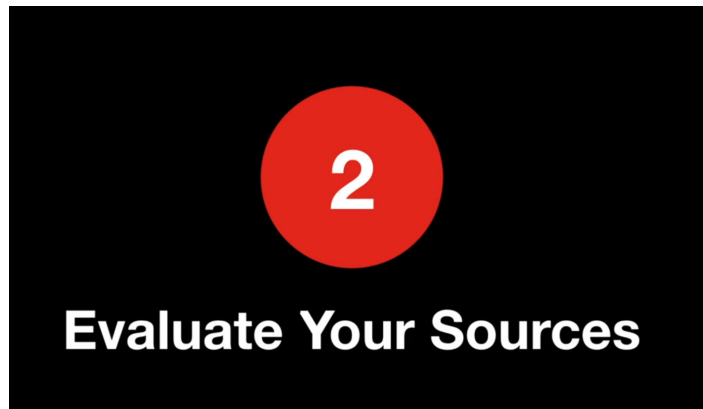
WATCH THE TED TALK AT:

ted.com/talks/j_marshall_shepherd_3_kinds_bias_that_shape_your_worldview

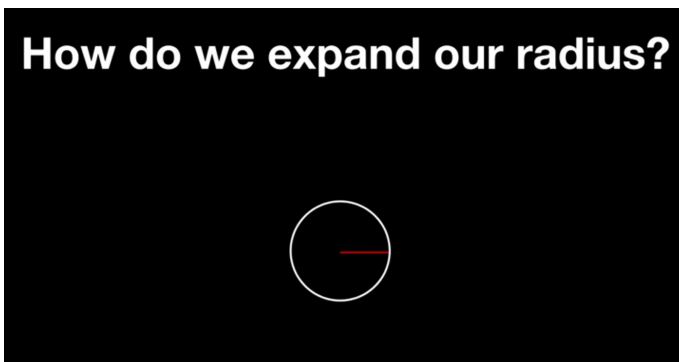
Think about it

1. Dr. Shepherd says, "Science isn't a belief system." Explain how Dr. Shepherd can confidently make that statement by doing a compare and contrast of a belief system and science.

2. Answer Dr. Shepard's questions regarding this image: Summarize what you think contributed to the place where scientists and the public are so far apart on science issues.



3. Identify five things that humans do to contribute to climate change.

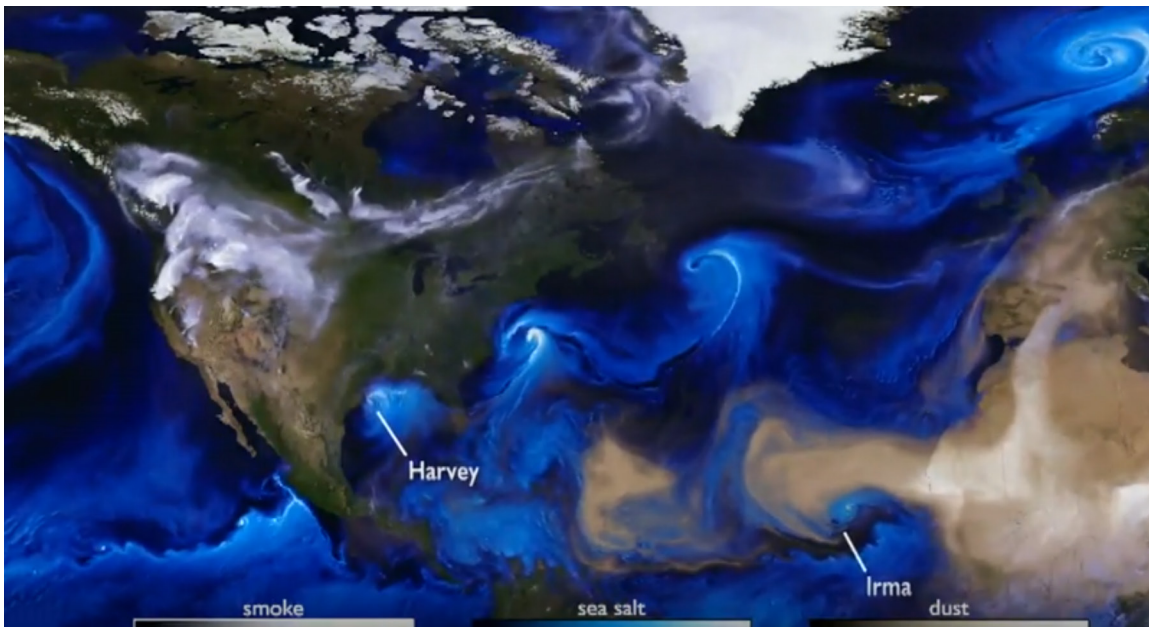


4. Define what the word *perception* is. Explain what you feel shapes perceptions about science.

5. Explore the differences between a belief system and a bias. Define the three biases Dr. Shepherd explores. Did you have the “Oh, I know that!” moment he said you would with any of them?

6. Prior to this TED Connection did you know there was a difference between climate and weather? Point out three specific differences to help us understand how they truly are different things.

7. Dr. Shepherd explains the illusory superiority complex. Provide an example you have seen of this.



8. Summarize in your own words what “cognitive dissonance” means. Provide two examples that are not listed in the talk.

9. Identify the five things that Dr. Shephard says contribute to biases and perceptions that people have about science.

10. Infer what you feel Dr. Shephard means when he states, “That’s just the era we are in,” when discussing how news reporters were assigned to dismiss fake information about weather forecasts in the 2017 hurricane season.

11. Postulate as to why you think Shephard calls “belief systems and biases, literacy and misinformation boxes that are cornering our perceptions.”

12. Translate what “expand your radius means” from Dr. Shepherd’s words into your real life. He discusses it in reference to science. Apply it to two different areas of your life that are not science-based.

13. Greg Fishel states, “The mistake I was making and didn’t realize until very recently...” Defend how he could have been engaging in “confirmation bias” and not been aware of it. Further define what confirmation bias is.

14. Fishel explains in the last sentence of his talk that “to say ‘nothing’ was not a responsible thing for me to do as a scientist or a person.” Based on what you now know, elaborate on what would have made this irresponsible behavior for Fishel.

Do it

- Challenge yourself to explore your own biases and see what you find yourself defending or even denying as bias.
- Discuss this with your parents or teacher and, for one week, study your favorite famous personality, from newscasters to celebrities, and see if you identify active bias.
- Follow one news outlet – electronic or print – for two weeks and keep track of any biases you notice within each section, from news to arts and entertainment.

Read about it

- psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201504/what-is-confirmation-bias
- sciencedaily.com/terms/confirmation_bias.htm
- britannica.com/science/confirmation-bias
- forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2017/01/24/the-dunning-kruger-effect-shows-why-some-people-think-theyre-great-even-when-their-work-is-terrible/#6977b74e5d7c
- washingtonpost.com/science/2019/01/07/whats-behind-confidence-incompetent-this-suddenly-popular-psychological-phenomenon/?utm_term=.386d745f8c0c
- sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S027795361830340X
- simplypsychology.org/cognitive-dissonance.html
- britannica.com/science/cognitive-dissonance

Surf it

- Visit Dr. Shepherd's website: drmarshallshepherd.com