

# Doing Something Abnormal Assignment

**Mr. Jackson**

Your assignment is to do something “abnormal,” in public, in full view of other people. If possible, document your actions as well as the reactions of your audience. Then, you will need to write about the experience, explaining the following in separate paragraphs:

1. Describe what you actually did.
2. How did people respond to you?
3. How did you feel during the experience?
4. What did you learn from the experience?

The four paragraphs together should be a total of no more than 400 words. Make sure you save a large portion of the words for paragraph #4.

Your “abnormal” activity does not need to be anything elaborate. This was an assignment I was given in an “Abnormal Psychology” class in college. What I did was sit in a public place and stare at people. I remember another male student in the class went to a department store and shopped for dresses. He went all out with it, actually trying some of them on and conversing with a salesperson during the process as though it was the most normal thing in the world for a man to buy and wear dresses. Whatever you do, don’t do anything that will get you in trouble. In the past students in my classes have done things as simple as wear their socks outside their shoes, hold hands and skip down aisles in grocery stores, to something a bit more involved such as make big signs like “Smile, Have a Great Day!” and hold them up on a street corner to passing cars. You can work in pairs or threes if you like—that makes it a little less threatening. If you choose this option, do the reflecting and writing independently.

Whatever you choose to do, you need to spend enough time doing it to really get a feel for the experience.

If you think you just absolutely cannot do this assignment, there is an alternative assignment for you. Write a brief essay where you explore why it is so difficult for people to do things which are “abnormal.” Show me some real insight. Perhaps look inward to your own reluctance to be “abnormal” or at least act “abnormally.” No more than 400 words total.