Resisting Obedience to Authority

This activity will help you to:
- Understand how people can resist authority
- Consider the implications of psychological research
- Apply psychological research to real world situations
- Use information from psychological theories and studies to support your ideas

Resisting Obedience

Recently we have examined a variety of research into the reasons why people obey authority, even when this requires them to act in ways they know are wrong. This research includes:

- Milgram's (1961; 1963) studies of obedience
- Factors that affect people's tendency to obey authority (e.g. trust; roles; legitimacy, buffers)
- The agency theory of obedience (agentic versus autonomous states)
- Other research studies of obedience e.g. Hofling et al (1966); Bickman (1974)

For this task you need to use the same research (and any other sources you think are useful, like your textbook, Moodle and the Internet) to work out and explain how we could make people **less** obedient.

What You Need To Do…

Write a leaflet aimed at people your own age that explains the danger of blind obedience and gives practical advice on how malevolent authority can be resisted.

Your leaflet **must**…
- Explain why an authority should not necessarily be obeyed
- Give **at least two** pieces of advice about how to resist authority (you can give more)
- Be written in accessible language for a general audience
- Use at least one image

It **should**…
- Make references to relevant psychological principles, theories and/or research studies to explain, support and elaborate on the suggestions you make

It **could**…
- Comment on how easy each suggestion is to apply in the real world and how effective it is likely to be

Key Skills

This could count as evidence for your Key Skills Communication portfolio (C3.3 Writing documents about complex subjects). In order to use it as such you must make sure that you include an **image** that relates to and aids the understanding of the text (e.g. a graph showing relevant research findings).