**Chapter 1**

**What is Perception?**

1. The book mentions the classic idea of there being only 5 senses, but also shows that this idea is false. Table 1.1 lists 12 total senses instead. So, why do you think the popular idea of 5 senses has persisted? In thinking about this, consider on what basis does one define a sense? Following this line of thought, can you list any sense not included in Table 1.1? Conversely, can you find any reasons that we might instead shorten the list to less than 5?

*Hints and discussion points: The traditional 5 may persist because of external anatomy, which is more obvious than minute distinctions of internal differences in neural systems. Also, one might also list phenomenology as a basis for the 5, as most people are phenomenally aware mainly of just those 5, although closer introspection can reveal the existence of the rest of the 12. The question is designed to help encourage this kind of introspection. Taken further, students may realize that at a perceptual level, sensory information is integrated into a whole percept. Thus, something seen and touched is experienced as a single entity, and for this reason one might argue about reducing the number to fewer than 5 – to think of how closely vision and touch are inter-related and integrated, and also many examples of how taste and smell are integrated and seemingly inseparable at perceptual levels of analysis. This question can then provide a means to discuss distinctions of sensation and perception, and how we might separately define sensory systems from perceptual systems.*

1. Can you think of anything that you haven’t experienced with your senses? If you can come up with such an idea, how sure are you that it didn’t originate somehow in sensory experience? Might it be possible to break it down into simpler ideas that did in fact come from sensory experience? Do you think all knowledge comes from sensory experience?

*Hints and discussion points: Students may suggest supernatural concepts like God, but sometimes people suggest that a sense of God originates from a sense of awe from observing the natural world, or perhaps from various emotional states. The question is designed to help students introspect about the idea that complex or abstract ideas can be broken down to simple ideas that may derive from sensation. This highlights the idea of how conceptual knowledge may just be an abstraction of sensory experience, and raises the epistemological view of empiricism.*

1. Might it be possible to make an argument that the study of sensation and perception is fundamental to psychology? Do you think it might be true that it is necessary to answer the questions of how knowledge enters the mind via sensation before we can formulate and answer any other psychological questions regarding what we do with that knowledge (e.g., internal cognitive processes such as memory and decision making)?

*Hints and discussion points: This question helps highlight the role of the class topic in the broader field of psychology, and helps integrate it into the field of cognitive psychology. Further, it may benefit students to formulate a distinction between perception and cognition.*