

Name	Ainsworth & Bell (1970). The strange situation.
Aim	To establish a method of measuring attachment. The study aimed to test how different children respond to strange and separation anxiety.
Method	Controlled observation.
Participants	Children aged 12-18 mths.
Procedure	<p>The procedure consisted of 3 minute episodes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Parent & infant enter the room2. Stranger enters and talks to parent, gradually approaches infant3. Parent leaves. Stranger leaves child playing unless appears distressed and then offers comfort.4. Parent returns, stranger leaves.5. Parent leaves, after infant has begun to play again.6. Stranger returns and carry on as in step 3.7. Parent returns, stranger leaves. <p>This observation provides a measure of attachment as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>Separation anxiety</i>: This is unease the child shows when left by it parent.2. <i>Infant's willingness to explore</i>: A securely attached child will explore more widely.3. <i>Strange Anxiety</i>: Security of attachment is related to greater stranger anxiety.4. <i>Reunion behaviour</i>: Insecurely attached children greet their parent by ignoring them or behaving ambivalently.

<p>Findings.</p>	<p>When the behaviours were examined certain patterns emerged:</p> <p><u>Secure Attachment (type B)</u> - 71% showed mild protest on their parent's departure. Upon return the infant was easily soothed.</p> <p><u>Insecure/avoidant attachment (type A)</u> - 12% displayed indifference to their parent left, and did not display stranger anxiety. Upon reunion they avoided contact with their parent and the parent generally ignored the infant whilst playing.</p> <p><u>Insecure/resistant attachment (type C)</u> - 17% were seriously distressed when their parent left and were not easily soothed. The infant sought comfort and rejected it simultaneously. The parent was also inconsistent; they were either over sensitive or angry and rejecting.</p>
<p>Conclusions.</p>	<p>The patterns of behaviour showed that this is a valid method of assessing individual differences.</p> <p>The greatest attachment type was regarded as securely attached.</p>
<p>Criticisms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the positive side- it is a valid measurement, children who have been shown to be attached usually have more positive social and emotional development.• Lamb et al (1977) did find that this may not be one of the best methods for investigating attachment (lacks validity). <p>Is it possible that what is being examined is trust rather than attachment?</p>