



INFERENCE & OBSERVATION

Illustrated by canine behavior

WFSC 422/689 Ethology

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OUR QUESTION

- How does **previous experience** influence our **inferences** and **observations**?
- **Observations**= what we actually experience, hear, see, feel, smell....
- **Inferences**= what we think about our experiences, the meaning learned by each individual

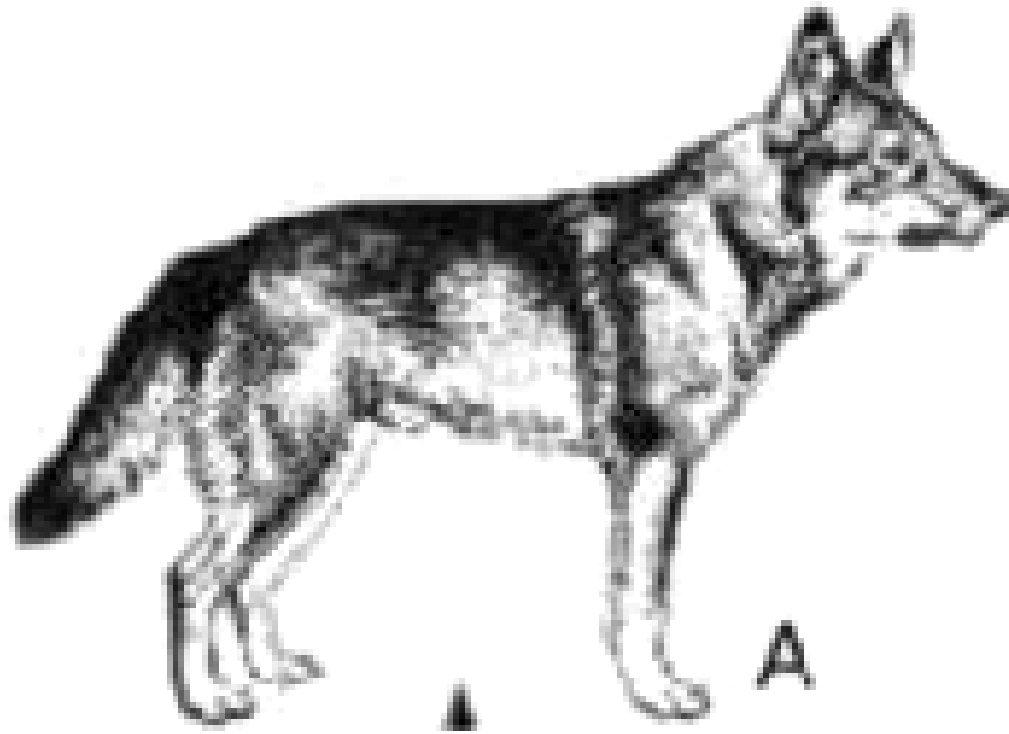


Form 2 groups of observers

- Count off "1"...."2"...."1"...."2"
- Write down the number of your group
- Group 2 close your eyes until I say "open"
- Group 1 keep your eyes open



Group 1: write what you see

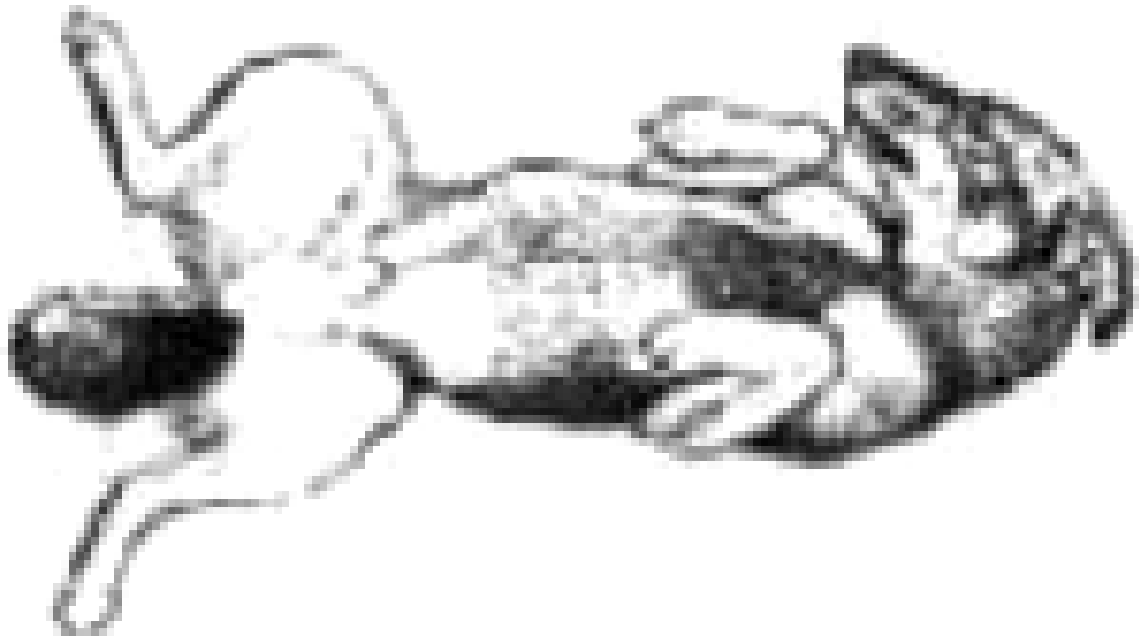




Switch observers

- Group 2 open your eyes
- Group 1 close your eyes until I say "open"

Group 2: write what you see



J

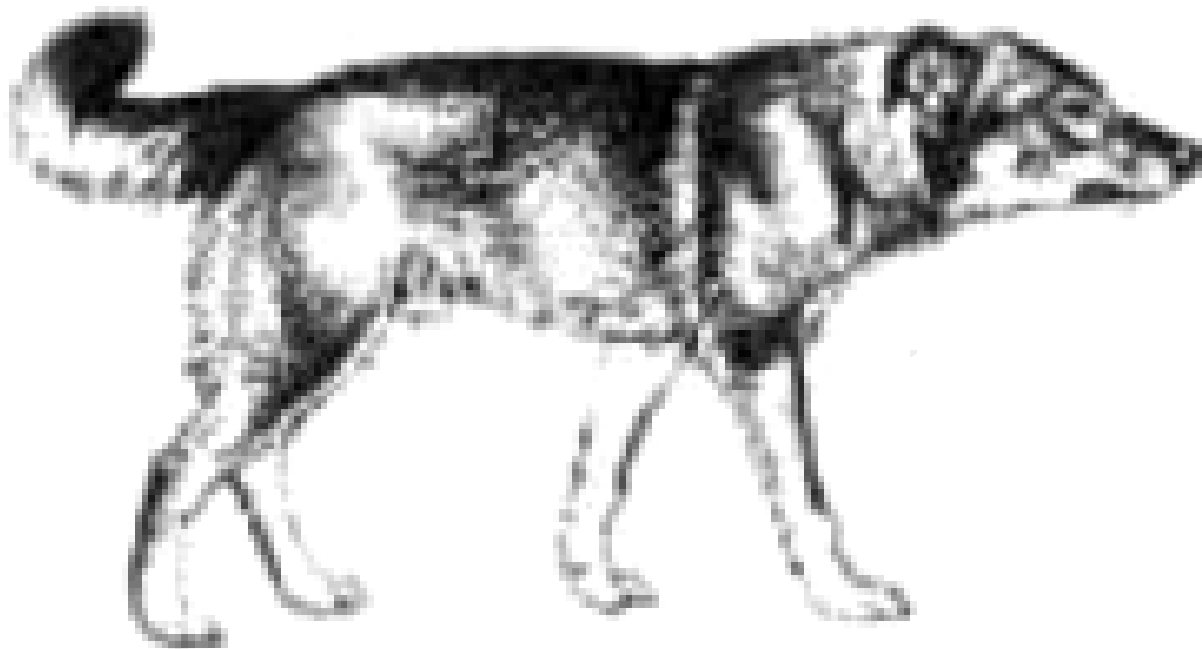


Both groups observe

- Group 1 open your eyes
- Next, both groups will observe together



All write down what you see



D



What did you just see?

- Compare your observation with your neighbor
- What was the last thing you wrote down when everyone had their eyes open?
- Discuss...in your small groups
- Report to the whole group

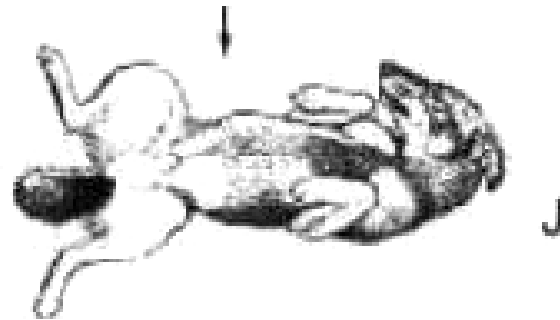
What was the prior experience of each group?

- Group 1
- Group 2

Neutral, calm, relaxed

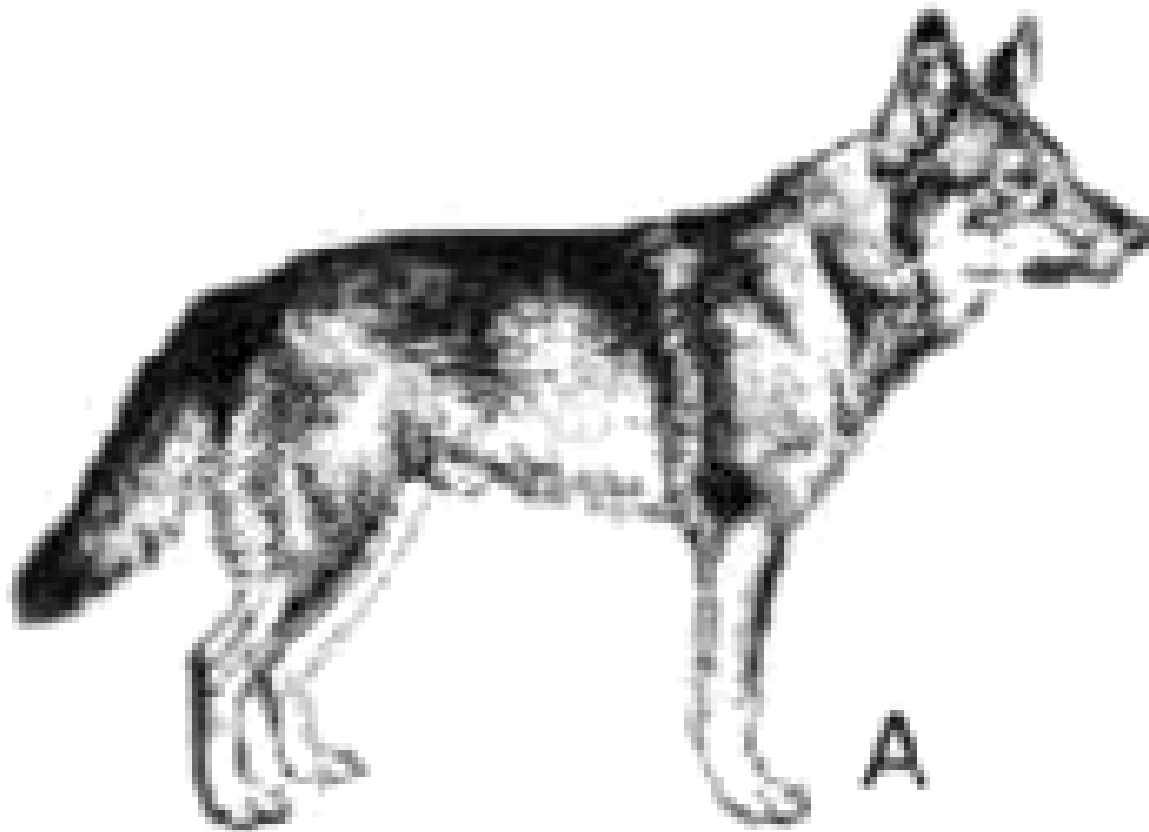


Solicitation of attention/overt threat aversion – lying down, leg up

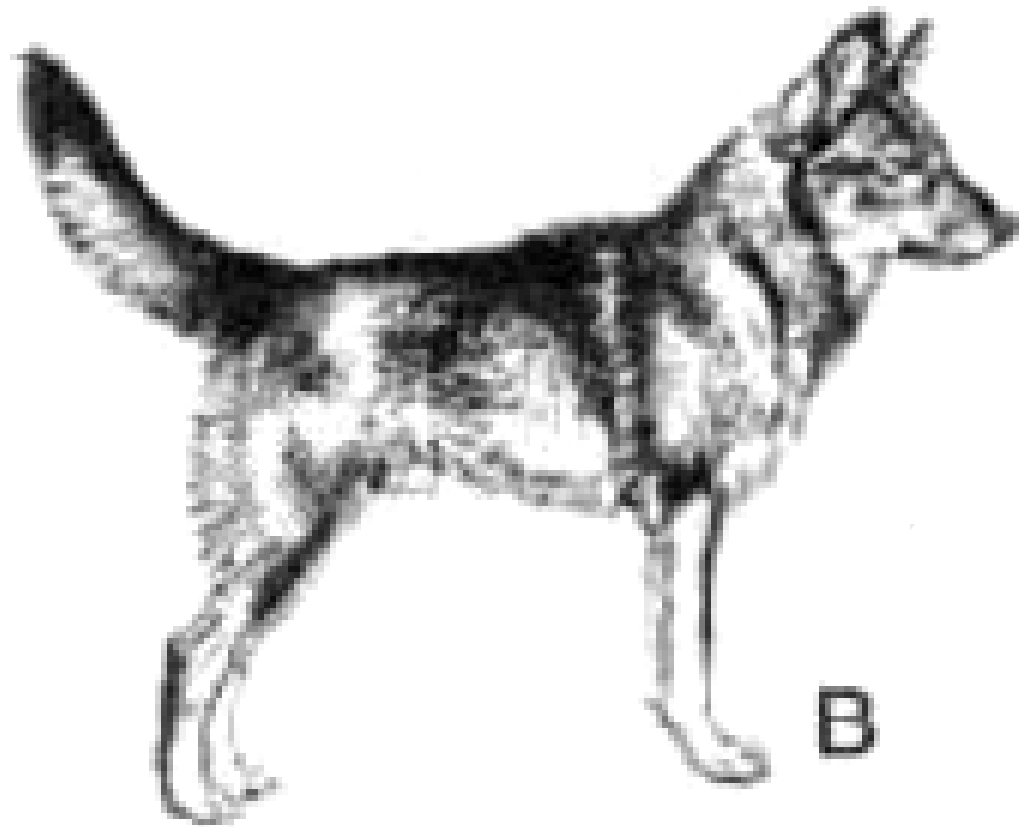




Describe your inference- A



Describe your inference- B



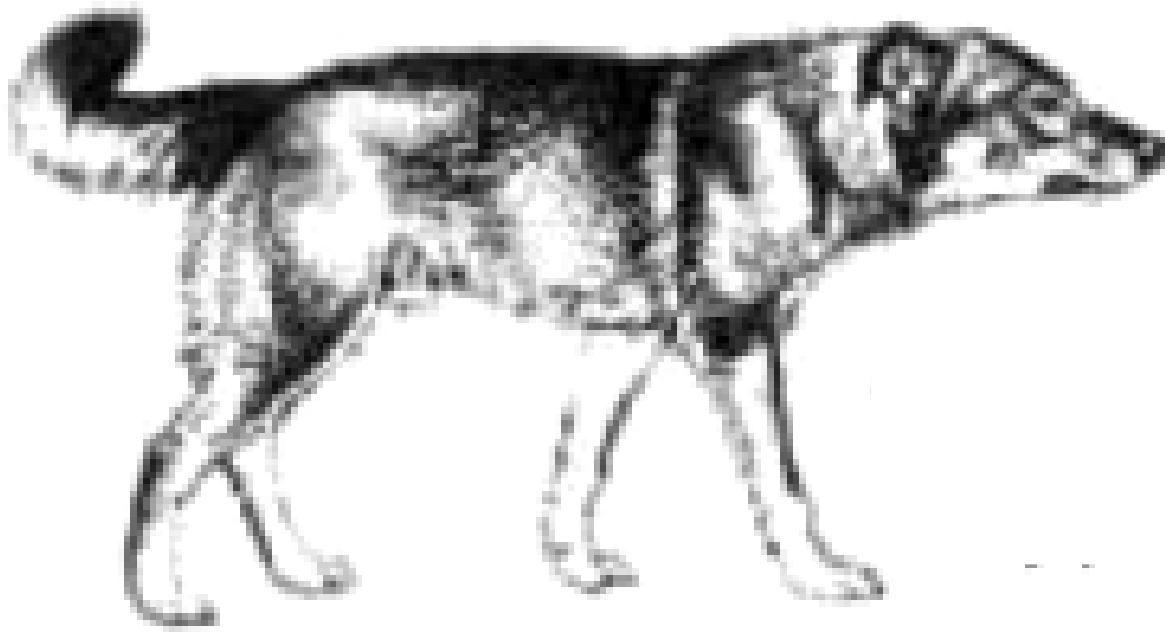


Describe your inference- C





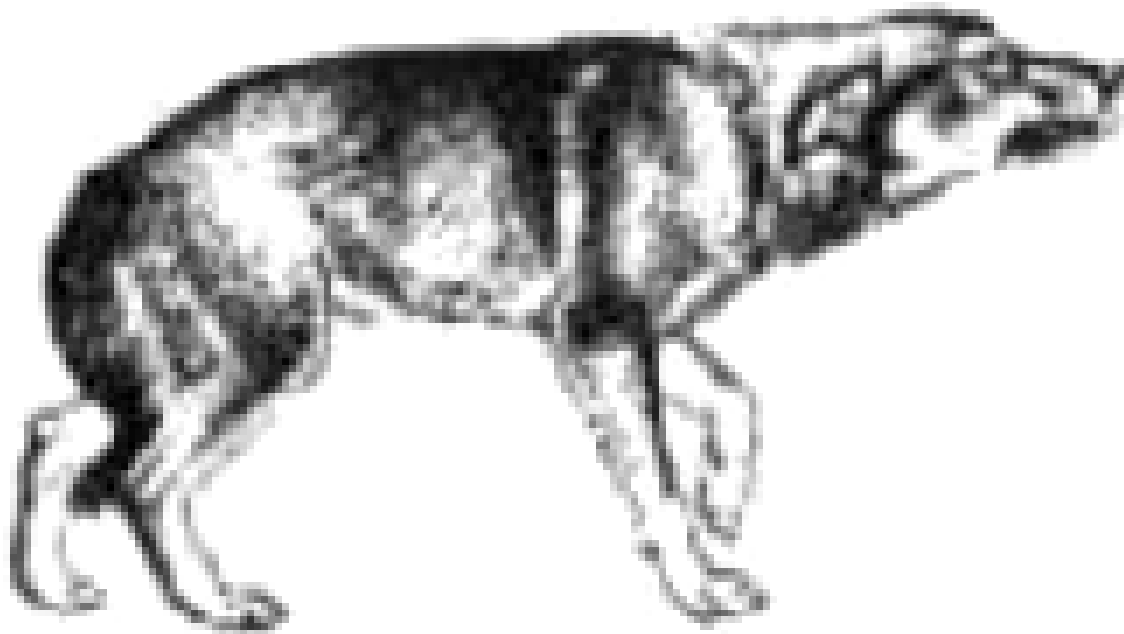
Describe your inference- D



D



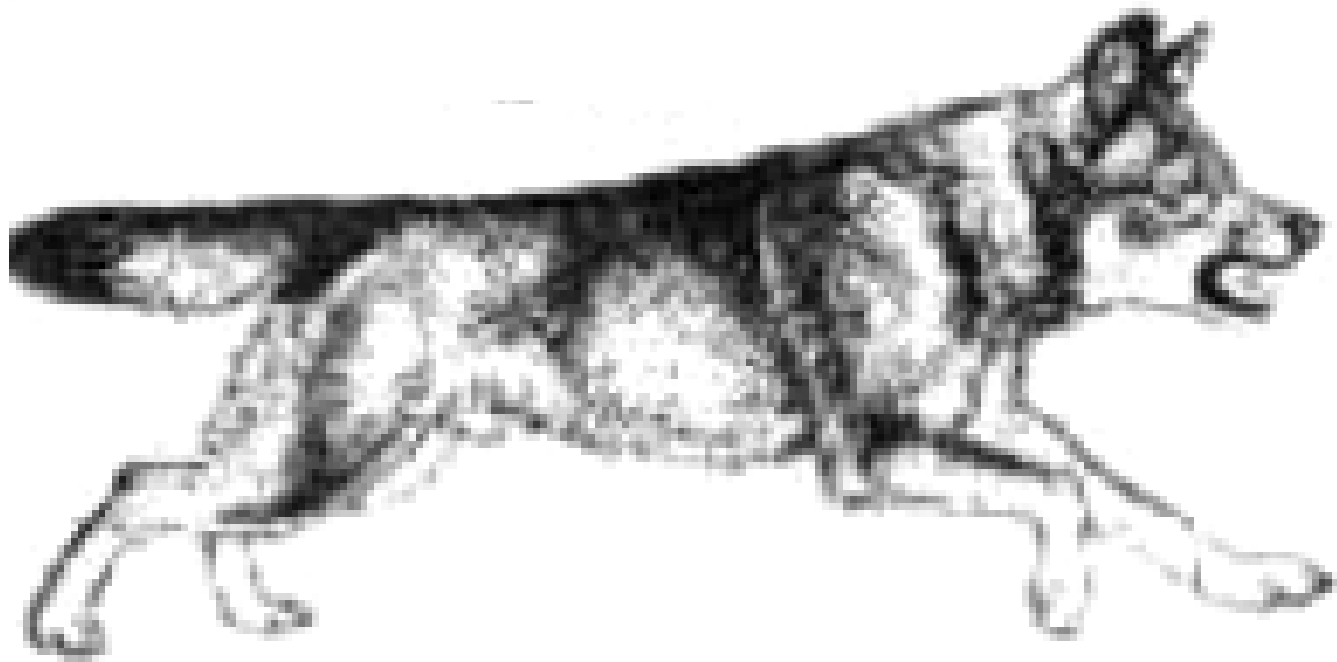
Describe your inference- E



E



Describe your inference- F



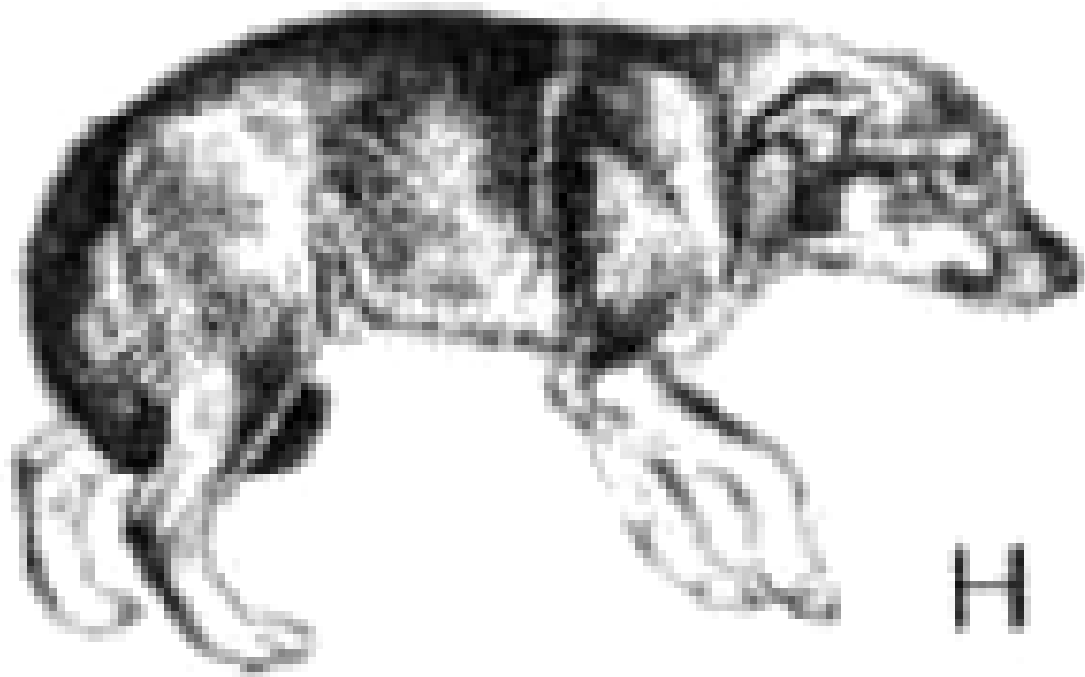
F



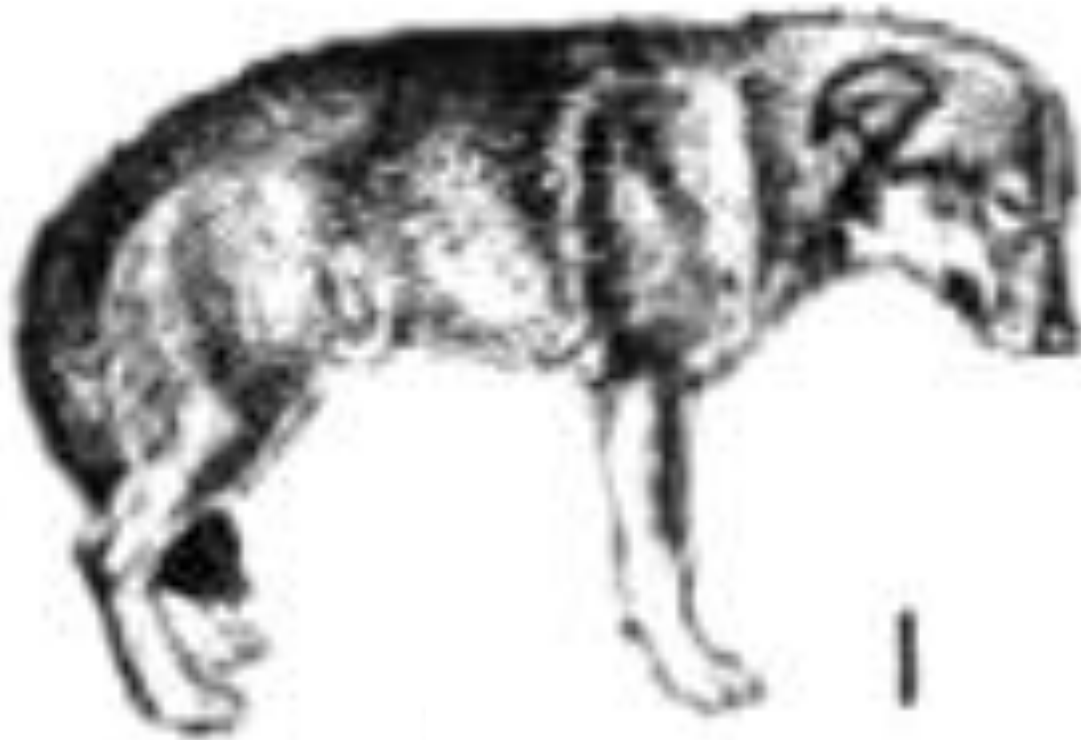
Describe your inference- G



Describe your inference- H



Describe your inference- I

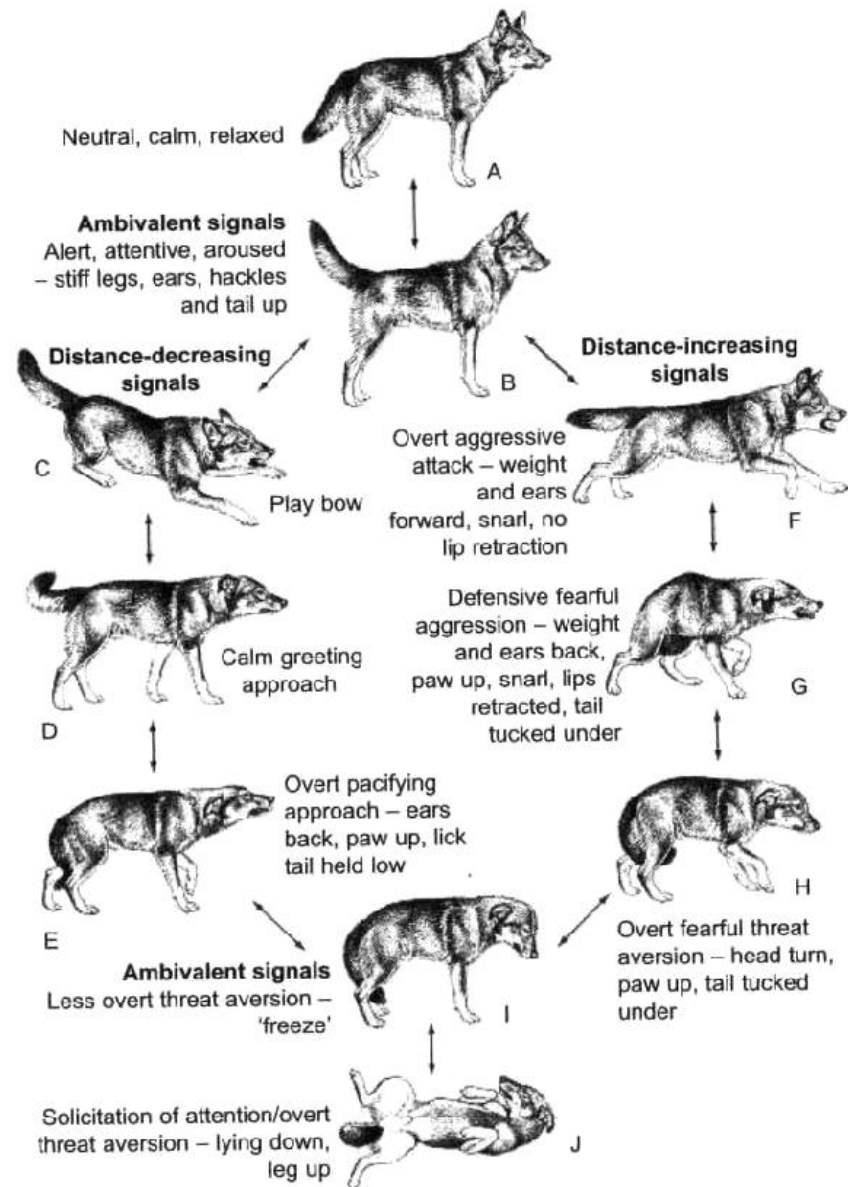




Describe your inference- J



Evidence



Source: Mugford 2007

Fig. 13.1. The body language of dogs, related to different social attitudes. Reproduced with kind permission from BSAVA.



Lessons Learned

- What differs between **observation** and **inference**?
- How does **experience** influence ...
 - **Observation**?
 - **Inference**?
- How would you explain the continuum of signals in canids to a child? Adult?



SOURCES

Mugford, R.A. 2007. Behavioural disorders of dogs. Pages 225-242. In: P. Jensen, ed. The Behavioral Biology of Dogs. CABI: Cambridge.