

PSYC 100 Winter 2010

Response Paper Requirements

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For each week this quarter (except Week 7), you are required to write a Response Paper. Each Response Paper is worth 10 points. It is not meant to be a very long assignment, but it should reflect your thoughts about the reading and should include some application of ideas from the chapter, as well as further questions about the material.

Each Response Paper you write will consist of the following sections:

Part 1. Response: Write a short, 2-3 paragraph reflection in response to what you learned from the chapter and lecture. You will need to keep your focus narrow (each week covers a lot!), so here are some prompt questions that might help guide you in writing this section (note- you're not limited to only answering one of these questions!):

- Did you learn about something that surprised you? What was it and why was it surprising to you?
- What stood out to you in the reading/lecture as "important" information, in terms of something you would like to remember and take away from the class? Why do you feel it is important?
- What did you find interesting?
- Did anything you read frustrate or anger you?
- What did you learn that you can relate to or that you can apply to your life?

Part 2. Apply 2 terms: Choose two psychological concepts or terms that you learned this week and provide examples of how they work in the real world (different from the examples provided in the book or lecture).

Part 3. Further questions: Write 2-5 questions that you have after reading the chapter and watching lecture. These questions can be asking about something you didn't understand, OR you can ask questions which seek answers that go further than what the textbook says. Beyond your Response Paper, you should use these questions to prompt discussion with your groups or ask them in the "Questions about Class Material" section of the Discussion Board.

Guidelines and Grading: Your Response Paper should be a total of 1-2 pages (1" margins, 12 point Times font, single spaced). If you complete all sections above and put in some effort, show your learning and have correct spelling and grammar, you will receive 10 points. You may lose points for: short and/or shallow reflection (e.g. it's 1 paragraph and doesn't really reflect that you read the chapter or watched lecture), incorrect use of terms in part 2, leaving out any of the 3 sections, poor grammar/spelling. Response Papers will be marked down 20% if they are turned in later than 9pm on the due date, and another 20% for every day they are late.

Example Response Paper:

Thor Chetterson
Psyc 100
Response Paper
Chapter 6: States of Consciousness

Part 1: Response

This week I read Chapter 6, which was a fascinating examination of the mind and how it changes in altered states of consciousness. I found the whole section on sleep very interesting, especially the theories about why we sleep. I think it's amazing that with all of the technology we currently have to look inside the brain and understand the origins of human behavior, psychologists still don't fully understand exactly why we sleep. I love the mystery that nearly 1/3 of our lives carries- part of me doesn't want them to figure it out! The 'biological clock' idea is something I have recently experienced. When I took a trip to Thailand this past summer, coming back brought me terrible jet lag. Even though I hadn't slept much during the 16 or so hours it took to get back to Seattle, I was unable to fall asleep that first night back, because my body felt like it was morning...

The section on hypnosis was really interesting- I don't think I would be able to be hypnotized, since I feel like I have a hard time focusing my attention (making me low in susceptibility). But my sister, who is very strongwilled and who I would not perceive as very suggestible, was easily hypnotized in one of those stage shows- I couldn't believe it! She danced around like Madonna- something she would NEVER do in public! I understand a little bit more about how it works after reading the chapter- the idea that we can dissociate ourselves from our conscious experience makes a lot of sense (e.g. like trying to talk to my brother while he's playing videogames- he's in a totally different reality). This chapter also brought home to me how much of our perception is biological- especially reading about the effects of different drugs on the way we perceive and interpret the world, and the idea that some drugs can really alter our behavior and perhaps even our personality if we become addicted to them.

Part 2: Applying terms

Change Blindness

This concept is basically the idea that we don't notice if things change in our environment if we're not specifically attending to them. An example of this is when movie edits that make mistakes are not usually caught unless we've seen the movie quite a few times.

Latent Content

This is the idea that there is underlying meaning to dreams that is different from the manifest (obvious) content. For example, I tend to have a recurring dream of not being able to find the classroom or not having prepared the syllabus on the first day of class. This has never actually happened to me, but I think it reflects the underlying anxiety that comes with the beginning of a quarter and my fears that I will not be prepared.

Part 3: Further Questions

- The idea about unconscious processing of information was especially intriguing to me. Do you think we might have unconscious perceptions of race that we might not consciously control that affect the way we treat each other? Is this perhaps one reason why racism is so hard to eradicate?- we receive many messages about race in the media, news, etc... that may favor some races over others.
- If hypnosis is not reliable, does that mean that it is illegal to use it in court cases in order to get people to remember a crime?