



## AP Psychology 1999 Sample Student Responses

**The materials included in these files are intended for non-commercial use by AP teachers for course and exam preparation; permission for any other use must be sought from the Advanced Placement Program. Teachers may reproduce them, in whole or in part, in limited quantities, for face-to-face teaching purposes but may not mass distribute the materials, electronically or otherwise. These materials and any copies made of them may not be resold, and the copyright notices must be retained as they appear here. This permission does not apply to any third-party copyrights contained herein.**

These materials were produced by Educational Testing Service (ETS), which develops and administers the examinations of the Advanced Placement Program for the College Board. The College Board and Educational Testing Service (ETS) are dedicated to the principle of equal opportunity, and their programs, services, and employment policies are guided by that principle.

The College Board is a national nonprofit membership association dedicated to preparing, inspiring, and connecting students to college and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 3,900 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves over three million students and their parents, 22,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges, through major programs and services in college admission, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT<sup>®</sup>, the PSAT/NMSQT<sup>™</sup>, the Advanced Placement Program<sup>®</sup> (AP<sup>®</sup>), and Pacesetter<sup>®</sup>. The College Board is committed to the principles of equity and excellence, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

Copyright © 2001 by College Entrance Examination Board. All rights reserved. College Board, Advanced Placement Program, AP, and the acorn logo are registered trademarks of the College Entrance Examination Board.

In the study where researchers use a photograph taken in a public park to examine how people perceive, learn + remember information, concepts such as schema, retroactive interference, representativeness heuristic, confirmation bias + framing help explain the perception of the participants. A schema is a ~~set~~ set of cognitions or beliefs that a person holds. The schemas of the participants may have been that men tend to be aggressive while women ~~are~~ <sup>tend to be</sup> passive. This factor may have influenced the participants in the way that they may have assumed, because of their previous schemas, that it had to have been the man that was shouting in the picture. ~~Retrospective~~ Retroactive interference ~~is~~ occurs when previously learned material is lost because recently learned material hinders ~~the~~ memory. This may have accounted for the misjudgement of the participants because the several photographs shown after the park photograph may have interfered ~~at~~ with the park photograph itself. Perhaps these other photographs showed ~~people~~ people interacting in which ~~there~~ males dominated over females. This may have led to the "memory" that in the park photograph the man was shouting at the woman. Representativeness heuristic

is when the most common instance is used as a rule of thumb. In this experiment, the participants think that the ~~most~~<sup>more</sup> common ~~instance~~<sup>man</sup> thing would be for the man to be shouting, not the woman and therefore the participants use this rule of thumb when drawing a conclusion about the park scene.

Confirmation bias occurs when a person ignores all information that disagrees with their belief and ~~overestimates~~<sup>overlooks</sup> only accepts information that confirms their beliefs. Participants may have ignored the fact that it could have been the woman shouting if the participants believed that only men shouted and displayed aggressive behavior. In this case, they would believe that it had to have been the man shouting because only men do this in their belief. Framing is when one's mind shapes a story to fit one's already held beliefs. Participants shaped their memories in order to create a story that seemed more believable and more generic. In this experiment, the concepts of schema, retroactive interference, representativeness heuristic, confirmation bias, and framing all could have played a

role in changing the <sup>participant's</sup> perception of the  
scene. ~~into something?~~

THE SUBJECT'S PERCEPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH COULD BE colored BY many different factors. 7.

A schema is one's ~~pre~~ perception of an object or event in relation to a previous experience. In this case, ~~the~~ the subjects may have named the man as the aggressor because the schema they have formed says that men are usually the aggressor, and therefore this example must be the same. Rather than accommodating the schema to fit the scene, they assimilate the scene into the schema, even though the woman appears to be shouting at the man.

Perhaps the other pictures influenced the subjects' interpretation of the first. This would be the case of retroactive interference, in which later events influence or distort one's memory of an earlier event. Here the subjects could have seen <sup>later</sup> photos which showed the male as the aggressor, and therefore mistakenly ~~perceived~~ remembered the male as the aggressor in the first.

Representative Heuristic, ~~the~~ however, might suggest the male as the aggressor. Heuristics are basic rules of thumb. It is usually assumed that the male in a relationship is more aggressive, therefore the subjects may have just assumed the same in the case of the photograph.

However, the perception may not be the fault of the subject, but rather of the experimenter

Reinforcement is most influential in eating habits.  
Positive reinforcement for good eating habits leads to  
good eating habits.

Modeling is used to teach by example. Children will  
often mimic and learn the lifestyle of their parents,  
which includes eating habits. Therefore, if parents are  
prone to eating junk food, the children will most  
likely follow the model and eat junk food too.

Different cultures place different levels of importance  
upon eating habits and body weight. For example, in  
western societies, skinniness is valued as a trait  
of beauty. ~~Such~~ <sup>the eating</sup> attitudes can influence habits  
of people; ~~girls~~ <sup>girls</sup> in western societies are  
more likely to have eating disorders such as anorexia  
or bulimia.

Retroactive interference is when a person's ~~to~~ thoughts are overtaken to past experiences similar to the one being shown or the present activity.  
Confirmation bias is ~~born~~ when a person can see him or herself in a similar situation and invent an outcome <sup>of that situation and make it</sup> similar to that of their own.

The significant number of participants who described the man as being the aggressor must have related ~~to~~ the situation to ~~that~~ it being the outcome of usual events. The amount of people who chose to label the man as the aggressor in an apparent ~~to~~ disagreement with the woman must have been in such a predicament.

The perception of these participants must have been affected by confirmation bias. They must of created an outcome to that which was similar to their ~~&~~ own situations.