
AP[®] Psychology

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Free Response Question 1

- Scoring Guideline**
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Question 1: Content Application**7 points****General Considerations**

1. Answers must be cogent enough for the student’s meaning to come through. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce a student’s score, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word.
2. A student can earn points only if the student clearly conveys what part of the question is being answered. It is possible to infer the part of the question being answered if it is consistent with the order of the question.
3. The response must apply the concept to the prompt; a definition alone will not earn the point.
4. Examples provided in the Scoring Guidelines for each of the points are not to be considered exhaustive.
5. Within a bulleted question part, a student will not be penalized for misinformation unless it *directly contradicts* correct information that would otherwise have earned a point. For example, if a response applies a concept in two contradictory ways (such as identifying both the measured variables as the independent variable or describing proactive interference as interference from both older and newer information), the point is not earned.
6. Within a bulleted question part, if the response addresses details from a scenario other than the one in the prompt, the point is not earned.

Part A Malia has an assignment to write a research paper for a class. She has several weeks to work on the paper before turning in the finished product.

Explain how each of the following could apply to Malia’s completion of the assignment.

Albert Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy**1 point**

The response must indicate that Malia believes that she has the ability to write a good paper and that facilitates her finishing the assignment.

OR

The response can indicate that a lack of belief in her ability to write a good paper makes it less likely she would finish the assignment.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Malia believes she can write a good paper, so she does her research and gets a good grade from her teacher.*
- *Malia is unsure whether she can write a good paper, so she procrastinates and ends up not doing well.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to confidence, self-confidence, self-esteem, intelligence, or more general abilities.

- *Malia is confident about her paper.*
- *Self-efficacy is how Malia feels about herself. If she has a high amount of self-efficacy, she will be more likely to complete the project.*

A low score on the Big Five trait of neuroticism**1 point**

The response must indicate a description of low neuroticism and connect it to completion of the paper (either helping her or hindering her).

Acceptable explanations include:

Responses that include calmness, security, being self-satisfied, emotional stability, low anxiety, or low on depression.

- *Malia exhibits a sense of calm so she can complete her project on time.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to aspects of any of the other Big Five trait factors.

- *Malia is very diligent, which helps her complete the project.*
-

External locus of control**1 point**

The response must indicate that Malia believes that outcomes are determined by forces outside of her control (e.g., fate, luck, destiny, circumstances, other people) and that affects her completion of the paper.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Malia thinks that fate determines her life, so she doesn't take proactive steps to do her paper.*
- *Malia thinks that random factors determine her life, so she doesn't put in the effort to complete the assignment.*
- *Malia believes that the teacher is biased against her and so she doesn't even try to complete the paper.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Malia knows that she controls her destiny.*
 - *Malia is worried that she will have bad luck.*
 - *Malia has no control over how her paper is graded, so she could do poorly.*
-

Divergent thinking**1 point**

The response must indicate that Malia generates multiple or creative solutions, and this affects her completion of the paper.

Acceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to examples of creativity, including innovative thinking, brainstorming, "thinking outside the box," etc.

- *Malia considers many different topics for her research paper/uses an innovative approach to help her to do well on the assignment.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to convergent thinking.

- *Malia knows there is one best way to write a good paper.*
-

Efferent neurons**1 point**

The response must indicate that efferent (motor) neurons contribute to some element of motor movement which affects Malia's completion of her paper.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Malia's efferent neurons help her move her fingers, so she can type her paper.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

- *Malia's efferent neurons help her feel where the paper is.*
-

Part B Malia’s teacher, Mr. Barry, has many papers to grade.

Explain how each of the following might apply to his success in grading the papers.

Incentive Theory

1 point

The response must indicate that a desired activity or an external reward motivates Mr. Barry, and this helps him complete the grading.

Acceptable explanations include:

- *Mr. Barry sets a goal that if he completes his grading, he can watch his favorite television show.*
- *After every five papers he corrects, Mr. Barry rewards himself with five minutes on his favorite social media account.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

The response refers to intrinsic motivation.

- *Mr. Barry really wants to give his students feedback, so he grades all the papers in one night.*
-

Crystallized Intelligence

1 point

The response must indicate that accumulated knowledge (facts, general information, or vocabulary) helps Mr. Barry successfully grade the papers or that a lack of accumulated knowledge hinders his success.

Acceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to wisdom, increased knowledge, and experience as examples of accumulated knowledge.

- *Mr. Barry can grade papers quickly because he is able to remember lots of facts about the topic he is grading.*
- *Mr. Barry is wise because he has learned so much in his life, which helps him grade papers faster.*

Unacceptable explanations include:

Responses that refer to general intelligence, or to fluid intelligence.

- *Mr. Barry grades papers faster because he is an experienced grader.*
 - *Mr. Barry is capable of thinking very quickly and thus can grade a large number of papers in one night.*
-

Total for question 1 7 points

Q1 Sample 1A 1 of 2

Question 1 Question 2

On

PART A

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The level of self efficacy is the ability you believe you have to complete goals or accomplish tasks. Maria has high self efficacy that means she believes that she will complete her research paper ^{on time and easily} and do well on it.

Having neuroticism or being neurotic means you are emotionally unstable. If you score low on the neuroticism scale then you are emotionally stable and can function well. Having a low neuroticism scale can help Maria be calm and stable while writing her research paper, helping her complete it.

External locus of control means you believe that outside factors or the environment affect you. For example if you have an external locus of control you may not work as hard because you believe the environment will affect your destiny or life. If Maria has this belief of external locus of control she may just think it's not well on the paper it's not meant to be. She may also say well I did bad on the paper given to how cold my environment was while writing it so it would take longer to complete.

Divergent thinking is the type of thinking that uses creativity, imagination, and coming up with multiple answers. If Maria has divergent thinking then she can use that creativity to come up with a really good research paper topic. ~~that way~~ When coming up with that topic she will be able to complete her paper using many different/related topics in it to support her writing.

Efferent neurons are also our motor neurons which come from brain then out the body. Maria is using these efferent

Q1 Sample 1A 2 of 2

Question 1e Question 2e



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

neurons simply write / type the essay by moving her hands and arms. These neurons help with the physical completion of her essay.

PART B

Incentive theory is when someone is being given an incentive or reward they're more likely to complete it and quicker. Let's say Mr. Barry's incentive is one he finishes ^{grading} these papers he gets an evaluation. Having that incentive will then help him successfully grade the papers and do so quickly.

Crystallized intelligence grows as you age or get older. It has to do with having or retaining lots of knowledge and facts (this is the wise intelligence). Mr. Barry could have picked a topic for the paper that he has a lot of knowledge on. He would be able to grade the papers quicker and easier having that crystallized intelligence in the topic.

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. o not skip lines.

Part A

Theory of self-efficacy - Albert Bandura's theory of self-efficacy states that the greater one's measure of self-efficacy is, the more ~~the~~ fluid intelligence they have, and she has weeks to work on this project, so if she has a high measure of self-efficacy, she will pace herself and complete the sign ~~in~~ in a timely fashion, proving that she has fluid intelligence.

Big Five trait of Neuroticism - ~~the~~ The Big Five trait of neuroticism measures ~~the~~ ~~the~~ tendency to get anxious and tense. Malia having a low score of neuroticism will mean that she doesn't get anxious or nervous easily, therefore, she will most likely not be anxious over this project, even as the deadline draws near.

External locus of control - Having an external locus of control means that one feels they don't have control over what happens to them, that they don't feel like they have control in their life. They don't believe their life is in their control. If Malia has an external locus of control, she might feel helpless and insecure in her ability

Q1 Sample 1B 2 of 3

Question 1 Question 2



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

to write the paper well, believing that it all comes down to what ~~the~~ grade the teacher gives her, not her own abilities. Her teacher gives her a good score, she might believe it was just like, not her own abilities.

Divergent thinking is the type of thinking where one isn't asked to find one answer, divergent thinking tests flexibility and creativity. In writing a research paper, Malia will have to use divergent thinking in order to write a well-structured, accurate, engaging research paper rather than using her convergent thinking to find one answer. There isn't one answer for writing a research paper.

Efferent neurons ~~are~~ fire when complex thought is being carried out. In writing her research paper, Malia will be doing a lot of high level thinking, and subsequently, will have lots of efferent neurons firing.

~~Part~~ Part B

Incentive theory states that when an incentive is provided, the task will be carried out faster.

Q1 Sample 1B 3 of 3

Question 1 Question 2



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

and done better. If Mr. Barry provides himself an incentive to finish grading his papers - like a treat when he finishes, or ~~eat~~ a cookie for every 10 papers to grade - the papers will be graded quickly and more thoughtfully.

Crystallized intelligence is the idea that intelligence is fluid and cannot be changed. If Barry believes that intelligence isn't fluid, he ~~go~~ doesn't believe the students can change how well they do on assignments. Intelligent students do well, less intelligent students do poorly, according to him. Therefore, students ~~eat~~ will always do the same on assignments, so he can just give the intelligent students high scores and the less intelligent students low scores, because he believes they will always do the same on assignments as before. Because isn't putting a lot of thought into grading the assignments, he will finish faster.

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Malia has lots of factors that will contribute to her completion of her assignment. First, using Albert Bandura's theory of self efficacy Malia should focus on the assignment as soon as she can preparing rewards for her efficiency upon the completion of the assignment. The rewards will remind Malia of the assignment making her more determined to work on it. Malia having a low score on the Big Five trait of neuroticism mean Malia should be more focused on the assignment than most people would. If Malia has an external locus of control she will be relying on things like fate and luck which can not be controlled. Therefore she should have an internal locus of control. Divergent thinking will cause Malia to think from different perspectives to further explain her research and provide more detail from all sides. If Malia harnesses efferent neurons she can focus on the assignment and be productive enough to complete the assignment on time. However, Malia's teacher, Mr. Barry, can use a few strategies to help ~~him~~ him focus on grading the assignment. He can use incentive theory to give himself something to work towards. Lastly, Mr. Barry can use crystallized intelligence to be more productive when it comes to grading allowing him to speed up the grading process and complete the grading.

Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

The responses to this question were expected to demonstrate an application of concepts from several areas of psychology to a real-life scenario. This scenario had two parts. For the first part of the scenario, the responses needed to apply concepts to a student's ability to complete a research paper. The concepts that were distinguished and applied to part A included: the motivational concept of self-efficacy, personality concepts of neuroticism from the Big 5 theory and external locus of control, the cognitive concept of divergent thinking, and the biological concept of efferent neurons. The second part of the scenario required students to explain how incentive theory and crystallized intelligence could apply to a teacher grading research papers.

Sample: 1A

Score: 7

The response earned point 1 because it indicates that a belief in a specific ability can be attributed to Malia completing her paper “on time and easily.” The response earned point 2 because it indicates that neuroticism means emotionally instability and that Malia's low score will help her to be calm in order to complete her paper. The response earned point 3 because the response indicates that the outcome is caused by destiny and that is why it takes longer for Malia to complete her paper. The response earned point 4 because it indicates that Malia uses “many different/creative topics” to complete her paper. The response earned point 5 because it indicates that Malia uses her efferent neurons to “write/type the essay.” The response earned point 6 because the response indicates that Mr. Barry finishes his grading quickly so he can go on vacation. The response earned point 7 because it indicates that Mr. Barry has knowledge on the topic of the research papers and thus grades them quickly.

Sample: 1B

Score: 4

The response did not earn point 1 because the response indicates that Malia uses intelligence rather than a belief in her ability to complete her paper. The response earned point 2 because the response indicates that Malia's low score will prevent her from being overly anxious “even as the deadline draws near.” The response earned point 3 because it indicates that it is Malia's “luck, not her own abilities” that leads to the outcome of her paper. The response earned point 4 because the response indicates that “flexibility and creativity” in thinking will help Malia produce a better paper. The response did not earn point 5 because the response indicates that thinking rather than motor movement moves Malia's fingers. The response earned point 6 because it indicates that specific external rewards lead to Mr. Barry grading faster. The response did not earn point 7 because the response indicates that Mr. Barry has a mostly fixed mindset about his students' intelligence.

Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

The response did not earn point 1 because the response indicates a focus on organization and efficiency rather than Malia’s belief in her ability to write a paper. The response did not earn point 2 because it does not indicate what it means to have low neuroticism. The response did not earn point 3 because the response does not indicate how external locus of control applies to the completion of Malia’s paper. The response earned point 4 because it indicates that Malia thinks “from different perspectives” which provides “more detail from all sides.” The response did not earn point 5 because the response does not indicate that motor movement is involved in Malia’s completion of her paper. The response did not earn point 6 because the response does not indicate an external reward nor an impact on Mr. Barry’s grading. The response did not earn point 7 because it does not indicate that Mr. Barry has or uses factual knowledge when grading his students’ papers.