

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT 1: BRIEF ARTICLE (Conjar - Educational Psychology)
CHOOSE ONE OF THE TOPICS LISTED BELOW.

- 1) Observe an infant at play (one or two years old). Describe the child's "thinking" based on her/his sensory and motor activity. Look for such things as object permanence, explorative behavior, and attraction to novelty.
- 2) Interview a child between the ages of two and six. Make it an interactive conversation, not a question and answer session. Observe and report on the following:
 - a) cognitive development
 - b) social interaction
 - c) language development
- 3) Visit a toy store and examine some age-appropriate toys. Are these toys consistent with the cognitive and physical skills of the assigned age? Explain.
- 4) Observe a class in session (any level). What operant conditioning principles are occurring in this class? Be sure to include both intentional and unintentional use of reinforcement and punishment and their effects on the behavior of students.
- 5) Try a memory experiment with two or three subjects of any age. Select 40 common words from the dictionary and divide them into two lists of 20 words each. Test each subject separately. Read List A and score how many of the 20 words the subject can remember. Then teach the subject one of the memory strategies from Chapter 6 in the text (organization, loci, etc.). Then present List B to the subject. Is there an improvement? Why or why not?
- 6) Describe in detail the strengths and weaknesses of the learning strategies that you use in your studying. Describe any adjustments you could make to improve your learning.
- 7) Develop a lesson plan for the grade level of your choice and area of expertise. The lesson plan should contain clearly written learning objectives for each activity or assignment. A list of activities is not sufficient. Then evaluate your plan based on information presented in your textbook or another source.
- 8) Try out and critique some educational computer software programs. Express your opinion on the value of computer-based instruction in general.
- 9) Interview a middle or high school student to explore what motivates him or her. Assess such factors as attributions for success and failure and locus of control. Determine if your findings are consistent with the theories presented in Chapter 10 of the textbook.
- 10) Watch a movie/video tape which deals with teaching (e.g., "Stand and Deliver," "Dead Poet's Society," etc.). Write a reaction to the film using principles of Educational Psychology.
- 11) Write a position paper on your view of education in the United States and offer suggestions for improvement.
- 12) Choose any one of the Educational Psychology Assignment Links from the Educational Psychology web site (<http://pages.towson.edu/conjar>). Summarize the content and evaluate the site for effectiveness and accuracy. Be sure to specify the starting topic selection and unit.

REMEMBER:

- 1) **You only need to choose ONE of the TWELVE assignment options from the list.**
- 2) **The Brief Article must contain at least one in-text reference citation with bibliographic information on any works cited.**
- 3) **Make the Brief Article approximately 2 pages long and divide it into 3 labeled sections (see below).**
- 4) **Papers submitted after the due date will be accepted; however points will be deducted for lateness.**

The options for the Brief Article include learning activities, experiments and reports based on web sites. Follow the formats described below.

FORMAT FOR BRIEF ARTICLE

The article must be typed using a computer word processing program. Set line spacing for double-space and allow 1-1.25 inch of margin space for instructor feedback. **Your paper should be organized in three clearly labeled sections plus a Works Cited list as indicated below:**

- Section 1: Summary or General Presentation - Describe the activity or present information as requested in the assignment.
- Section 2: Interpretation - Compare your findings with material from the textbook, class, other sources, or personal experience. You must make in-text reference citations for any outside material that you use for the paper. You must also have a full reference list at the end of the paper for any references cited in the text of the paper.
- Section 3: Discussion - Add your personal opinion or conclusions concerning the topic based upon the evidence presented and comparisons made in sections 1 and 2.
- Plus: Reference List - Include full bibliographic information for any works cited in the paper. (See APA or MLA guides on Conjar Psychology Website.)

One of the purposes of the Brief Project assignment is to allow you to choose information in Educational Psychology that is relevant to your interests. In some cases, your brief article will help introduce you to a topic that we will cover later in the semester. In other cases, your brief paper topic will offer an alternative explanation of concepts previously covered in the class. In yet other cases, the brief article topic may cover material that we don't have time to explore in the class. Previous exposure or the lack thereof, will be taken into account when your brief article is evaluated.

Proof read your paper carefully to make sure it is understandable and contains no spelling, grammar or typing errors.

Brief Project Worksheet

Section 1: Summary (Describe the activity / Present requested information / Summarize major points from the web site)

Section 2: Interpretation (Compare your findings with material from the textbook, class, other sources, or personal experience. You must have at least one reference citation in this section.)

Section 3: Discussion (Draw conclusions based on the material presented in Sections 1 and 2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the material observed and studied. Present personal opinions.)

Reference List: Include full bibliographic information for any works cited in the paper.

Scoring Guide: Brief Article (40 Points)

Section 1: Summary (10)

Topic was introduced effectively. Descriptions of the activity, article, or web site were clear and organized. Findings were reported accurately.

Section 2: Interpretation (10)

The resource selected for comparison was relevant to the topic and provided additional insight. Information from the comparative source was clearly identified by in-text citations and corresponding bibliographic information on a Works Cited page. Source information was paraphrased with a minimum of direct quotation.

Section 3: Discussion (10)

Conclusions are stated clearly and linked to information presented in the paper. Personal opinions are expressed clearly and are supported by the evidence provided. Evaluations show evidence of analysis and interpretation.

Additional Form Requirements (10)

Title accurately reflects the content of the article. The three sections are clearly labeled. Language is concise and clear. Paragraphs are effectively constructed and sentences are grammatically correct. Reference citations meet APA or MLA standards. Article conforms to the following guidelines: two pages, double-spaced, 10-12 Pt. font, and 1-1.25 inch margins.