

## PSY2105

### Term paper: Critical thinking paper

For this paper, you will have to evaluate your beliefs with respect to ONE of the following claims:

1. *Genes alone can determine certain human behavioral characteristics.*
2. *The time between birth and 3 years is the most important period of development in a person's life.*
3. *Punishment is an effective way to change undesirable behaviors.*
4. *Choose your own topic – to be approved by the professor.*

#### Follow these steps prior to writing your paper:

1. State your belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choose ONE of the claims listed below.</li><li>• State your current belief regarding this claim. Do you agree or disagree with the claim? Do you agree with a modified version of the claim?</li></ul>
2. Recognize that other beliefs also exist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State an alternative belief. Is there a contradictory or alternative opinion that relates to this claim?</li></ul>
3. Retrieve evidence that is relevant to the phenomenon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using PsychInfo and/or other databases, retrieve and read <u>two</u> scientific peer-reviewed articles that are related to the claim</li><li>• Reflect on whether your search was biased: Did you make an effort to retrieve evidence that corroborates as well as evidence that refutes your belief/attitude?</li></ul>
4. Evaluate your belief in light of relevant evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflect on whether your belief needs to be modified in light of the evidence you have retrieved</li></ul>

#### To write your paper:

I. Introduction	I. State and examine your chosen claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State the claim you have chosen</li><li>• Evaluate the claim: Does it need to be clarified? Does the claim make sense and mean the same thing to different readers? Does the claim contain terms that may have different meanings to different parties? If the claim is not clear, specify its meaning by providing definitions of the terms it refers to and a more precise version of the claim.</li></ul>
	2. State your belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State your belief regarding this claim.</li></ul>

	3. Recognize that other beliefs also exist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State an alternative belief</li> </ul>
2. Body	1. Retrieve evidence that is relevant to the phenomenon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize the two articles you have retrieved.</li> <li>A good article summary should answer the following questions in 3-4 paragraphs:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the hypothesis being investigated?</li> <li>What methodology was used to test the hypothesis? (briefly describe the methodology used as well as its advantages/disadvantages – employ the terminology learned in Chapter 2)</li> <li>What are the most important findings and conclusions?</li> </ol> </li> <li>When applicable, you may also choose to include additional information that is relevant to the phenomenon from the textbook or other sources.</li> <li>Discuss whether your search for evidence was biased towards confirming your belief. If so, discuss the consequences of a biased search. Should you remedy the situation?</li> </ul>
	2. Evaluate your belief in light of relevant evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss whether your belief needs to be modified.</li> </ul>
3. Conclusion	1. Take-home message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss whether the claim should be accepted. Perhaps the claim is correct but it needs to be modified or specified? Alternatively, perhaps there is insufficient evidence to judge the claim?</li> </ul>
	2. Unresolved question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify <u>one</u> question or issue that remains unresolved. Be sure that you include your own ideas/thoughts (i.e., do not simply re-iterate what the authors of the articles you have read suggest).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State the question and explain why this question is important.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Formatting instructions:**

- Make sure to correctly cite your sources of evidence using APA format in both the text and Reference list
- Please read the note on plagiarism posted in the syllabus. Do not copy any part of the articles or other sources into your paper. If you want to quote an author's words, then use quotation marks and required reference information (see APA manual).
- Proof-read your paper for language, clarity and logic.
- The correction grid for the Critical Thinking Paper is available on the course website.
- Your final paper should not exceed 7 full pages (measured in Times New Roman 12pt, double spaced). This does not include the Title page or Reference list. No marks will be allocated for information present on page 8 and over.
- Submit **one electronic copy** via the course website and **one printed copy** in class on the date indicated on the course syllabus.