Conquering the AP Psychology Exam-Monday, May 4, 2015 at 12pm

In addition to understanding content, students must have a clear understanding of the breakdown of the AP exam. Students with top scores often are familiar with the test structure and have practiced taking the exam throughout the year. My goal is for each of you to earn college credit. Therefore, all tests/quizzes will be given “AP style.” What does this mean, you ask????? Let me show you….

How AP exams are scored

Multiple choice and free-response questions (FRQs) are scored, combined, and weighted into a raw score. The raw scores are converted into the reported exam scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.

**AP Score Qualification**

5 Extremely well qualified (passing)

4 Well qualified (passing)

3 Qualified (passing)

2 Possibly qualified (not passing)

1 No recommendation (not passing)

Our goal is 4s and 5s, but most colleges award college credit for a score of 3 and above.

Part 1: Multiple Choice (70 minutes, 100 questions, 66.6%)

In this portion of the exam, you have 70 minutes to answer 100 multiple choice questions. These questions have five possible answer choices. Your raw score on this section will count for two-thirds of your exam score.

Tips:

* Read each question CAREFULLY, making sure to underline/highlight important info.
* Use process of elimination to select answer choices for questions that you are unfamiliar with.
* Answer ALL questions. You are awarded points for each correct answer, and points will NOT be deducted for incorrect answers.
* Typically, there are two answer choices with an acceptable answer. You must determine which answer more completely answers the question.

Sample:

1.According to one theory of psychology, many people have mental illnesses

because their maladaptive behaviors have proven rewarding for them in the past

and thus have been continued. This belief is consistent with which of the

following models?

(a) Behavioral

(b) Biological

(c) Cognitive

(d) Psychodynamic

(e) Sociocultural

Question from College Board’s *AP Psychology Course Description*

Part 2: Free Response Questions (FRQs 50 minutes, 2 questions, 33.3%)

In this portion of the exam, you have 50 minutes to answer two FRQs, or 25 minutes for each FRQ. Both FRQs will count for one-third of your exam score (16.66% for each FRQ). The first question usually deals with analysis and critique of a research method, and the second question usually deals with the application of a psychological perspective/approach.

Tips:

* Read the question twice. Underline/highlight the action words (analyze, identify, define, give an example, apply, evaluate, etc.). Analyze the question and answer ALL parts.
* Use five minutes for each FRQ to pre-write. Create a “skeletal outline” of the topics you will discuss and stick to it.
* Each FRQ is worth between 6-8 “points.” Logically guess how many points each part of the FRQ is worth, and address each point in the FRQ.
* DO NOT write an introduction or conclusion. Your first sentence should begin to answer the question.
* Write in paragraph form using complete sentences. DO NOT USE OUTLINE FORMAT OR BULLETS.
* Give examples whenever possible. Definitions alone do NOT score.
* Be clear. Do not use “fluff,” flowery prose, metaphors, similies, etc.
* DO NOT define a term with the same term. For example, "Conformity is when people conform to a standard way of behavior."
* You will NOT be penalized for incorrect information. However, you will not receive points for contradicted information.
* Use psychological terms, rather than colloquial language.

Sample:

Directions: You have 50 minutes to answer BOTH of the following questions. It is not enough to answer a question by merely listing facts. You should present a cogent argument based on your critical analysis of the question posed, using appropriate psychological terminology.

1. a. Discuss the cause of anxiety from each of the following perspectives.

* Behavioral
* Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic
* Biological
* Cognitive

b. Discuss a specific treatment technique for reducing anxiety used by professionals representing each of the four perspectives.

2. Describe the psychological concept of expectency or set. Discuss a specific example of how expectancy or set affects each of the following:

* Human perception
* The effects of a psychoactive drug on a human
* A student’s performance in the classroom
* Human problem solving
* Memory Question from 2001 AP Psychology exam