

Psy 210
Principles of Learning REACTION Paper

Note: do this one OR sniffy paper, not both!

ORGANIZATION AND HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

Paper Requirements

Your paper should be a review of a particular topic in learning, and the goal of the paper is to react to a new account/experiment/theory of learning originally based on animal research and evaluate the paper based on logic, goodness of fit, and your interpretations of results.

The paper length is 3 - 4 pages, and I would prefer that you do not exceed the maximum length. Each paper should include a title page in front and a reference section in back. The references should be typed in APA style. There is an APA manual on reserve in the Psy office and in the library. The APA style for citations and references is not followed consistently in your textbooks, so do not use them as examples. The text of the paper should be typed and double-spaced.

Paper Organization

Title Page

Include a title, centered on a sheet of paper. Double-space, and put your name and affiliation and the date under the title. Also you need a running head (an abbreviated title) that should be presented in the upper right corner of EVERY page of the paper, including the title page. Either to the right of the running head or under it should be the page number, with the title page numbered 1.

Introduction

You should construct the introduction by posing and answering general questions about your topic first. For instance, define the concept under study (learned helplessness, drug addiction, motivation, opponent processes) as it is understood in the literature. Tell me why it is of interest to study this process in learning/human behavior/animal behavior. Also, if it is possible, tell me why you think this topic is interesting. Back up your comments with summary statements from the textbook, or from readings from the class.

Body of Paper:

Next you should critique the paper in ONE of the following ways:

- 1) show how the article provides contradictory evidence for the theory in psychology,
- 2) show how the article is consistent with contemporary theory in psychology,
- 3) suggest how the theory may be modified to account for the findings in the article,
- 4) try to reconcile a disagreement between theorists or between theories or evidence.

Try to be logical and thorough in your description of the article and in your evaluation and criticisms of it. Use other sources from class and use Domjan to support criticisms. For example, if you wanted to pick apart Siegel's drug model using classical conditioning, first you would need to describe it, and then you might try to use it to explain various known results from experiments that are published. By applying it in this way, you may find it consistent with some experimental results, and contradictory with others. What should we do then? Modify the theory? Qualify its application to certain methods?

Reference section:

Remember that for any paper a reference section should be included at the end of the paper. Please see me for clarification of any of these suggestions. **The paper is due by THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 4:30 pm. If you want to hand it in early, please place it in an envelope marked for Julie Neiworth, Psy 210, and put it in my mailbox in the Psychology Offices (Olin 115).**

For the reaction paper, I recommend either finding references that were previously described in Domjan's 2006 text, or use one or more of the assigned readings from the class. You may select your own article for reaction if you feel strongly about a topic that I am not emphasizing in class, but note that if you select your own article you should run it by me so that I can approve its content. This is to avoid your writing a weak paper based on the selection of a weak article.

Topics that may work well within the Reaction Paper Framework:

Drug addiction: Opponent Process Model vs. Compensatory Response Model

Contemporary Theories of Classical Conditioning

Using Reinforcement with Clinical Populations and in Institutional Settings

The Training of Emotional Responses: Lie Detection, Use of Emotions in Experiments

Use of reward systems in educational settings

Use of punishment to change behavior (human applications)

Animal Cognition topics: categorization, timing, memory, self-awareness, language.