

Psychology Writing

Information collected and annotations written by Julie Schwarz.

Articles

All articles can be found on the ERIC search engine.

Butler, Adam; Phillmann, Kayah-Bah; Smart, Lona. "Active Learning Within a Lecture: Assessing the Impact of Short, In-Class Writing Exercises." Teaching of Psychology Vol. 28, No. 4 (2001) pp. 257-259.

Summary: This is another article that offers writing as a means to "stimulate active learning." The authors discuss how they had students write answers to questions pertaining to material presented in a recent lecture. After the exercise, the students "shared and discussed their responses." Response was positive and increased attendance because students reported better understanding lectures.

Connor-Greene, Patricia A. "Making Connections: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Journal Writing in Enhancing Student Learning." Teaching of Psychology Vol. 27 Iss. 1 (Winter 2000).

Summary: The article describes how journal writing about "personality theories" in a psychology class "actively" engages students in their learning. The article explains that while the student test scores improved significantly with journal assignments (versus classes with no journal assignments), the actual number of assignments (5 vs. 15) made little difference. Students' reactions ranged from "got my creative juices flowing" to "pushed me to keep up with class lectures and readings" to "helps you maintain writing skills"

Gareis, Karen C. "Critiquing Articles Cited in the Introductory Textbook: A Writing Assignment." Teaching of Psychology Vol. 22 Iss. 4 (Dec.1995).

Summary: This is a teaching idea for an introductory Psychology class. Students choose a "study presented in their textbook and find the original article." They then summarize and critique the article. The author notes that this is good at the entry level as it gets students familiar with Psychology terms and research methods early on as they will be doing much more at the higher levels.

Hemwlover, Scott H.; Caster, Jeffrey B.; Mizumoto, Ayumi. "Combining the Use of Progressive Writing Techniques and Popular movies in Introductory Psychology." Teaching of Psychology. Vol. 26, Iss3 (Oct. 1999) pp: 196-198.

Summary: This article talks about a lesson plan for an intro Psychology class in which the students are essentially given a paper assignment that is broken down into six small parts, and then students are given feedback on each section. Students pick out a movie that pertains to their topic (Ex: Autism-Rain Man). The authors say that the help they gave to the students improved their writing noticeably, and that the use of the movies made the class, and the assignment, more interesting to the students.

Henderson, Bruce B. "The Reader's Guide as an Integrative Writing Experience."

Teaching of Psychology Vol. 27 Iss. 2 (July 2000) pp. 130-132.

Summary: This article first outlines what a reader's guide is and highlights its key components (content outline, theorists and contributors, central concepts, hot topics, major resources). Students are assigned the task of creating a reader's guide for a Psychology topic of their choice, working individually. This assignment has two main goals: for the student to become familiar with a reader's guide and its uses, and to learn to write for their peers rather than just professors. The assignment has been used in both undergrad and grad school classes with the response being positive.

Jolley, Janina M.; Mitchell, Mark L. "Two Psychologists' Experiences with Journals." Teaching of Psychology Vol. 17 Iss. 1 (Feb. 1990) pp. 40-41.

Summary: The authors discuss the benefit of journal use in the Psychology classroom. They also discuss that "journals should not be blindly imported into Psychology classes from composition classes." Two specific modifications have to be made in the journals in order for them to be effective in the Psychology classroom: include "dialectical reasoning entries" and "compare and contrast grids."

Miller, Stuart. "Self-Knowledge as an Outcome of Application Journal Keeping in Social Psychology." Teaching of Psychology Vol: 24 Iss. 2 (1997).

Summary: This author talks about his students' use of journals in their Psychology classes. The journals were kept by each student and the information was about how they "applied course concepts to their daily social experiences." The journals were a good source of information for the professor, as he was able to assess the students' "understanding of the self" which is an "important component of student psychosocial development."

Nadleman, Lorraine. "Learning to Think and Write as an Empirical Psychologist: The Laboratory Course in Developmental Psychology." Teaching of Psychology Vol: 17 Iss: 1 (Feb 1990) pp. 45-47.

Summary: The purpose of this lab course is to incorporate psychological observation and writing into the curriculum. Varieties of writing include "scientific experimental report writing" and "sequential and topical protocols of infant behavior."

Norcross, John C.; Slotterback, Carol S.; Krebs, Paul M. "Senior Advice: Graduating Seniors Write to Psychology Freshman." Teaching of Psychology Vol: 28 Iss: 1 (Jan 2001) pp. 27-29.

Summary: The assignment was for Psychology seniors to give any and all advice to incoming freshmen in Psychology classes. While the advice to the incoming class was helpful, the assignment was also used to shape the department's Psychology Handbook and has become a regular writing assignment for the school's seniors.

Radmacher, Sally A.; Latosi-Sawin, Elizabeth. "Summary Writing: A Tool to Improve Student Comprehension and Writing in Psychology." Teaching of Psychology Vol. 22 Iss. 2 (April 1995).

Summary: Written by a Psychology teacher and a Writing Across the Curriculum teacher, the authors explained that they had their Psychology

students write a summary of a reading assignment from their text – an assignment called read/rank/review. The class was then handed back a representative set of papers that had been graded between one and four. Students then compared and discussed the differences. With this method, students learned to improve their writing, were made to think about the text, and had writing integrated in their class without protest.

Books

Lamm, Kathryn. 10,000 Ideas for Term Papers, Projects, Reports, and Speeches. New York, NY: MacMillan, 1998. ISBN 0-02-862512-9

Summary: True to its name this book is full of ideas. Symbols by the topics indicate if the idea is difficult, may require prior knowledge, needs examples, etc. Ideas specific to Psychology can be found in Psychology (358) and Mental Health (308)

Reed, Jeffrey G. Baxter, Pam M. Library Use: Handbook for Psychology 3rd edition. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2003.

Call# BF76.8.R43.2003

Summary: This book is a must-have for all Psychology students. It does not just cover library information; it also has chapters on Psychology journal articles and government publications. This book can answer many questions related to Psychology research as it narrows down the wealth of info available and pinpoints what is really good.

Smyth, T.R. The Principles of Writing in Psychology. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004. **Call# BF76.7.S57.2004**

Summary: This is one of the Palgrave Study Guides series and is written with the beginning Psychology student in mind. Early chapters cover writing process, citing, quoting, etc., useful to any writer. Middle chapters address specific tasks like writing a literature review, writing a methods section. Especially helpful are sections on writing about statistical data and quantitative research, as well as on qualitative research. Text ends with a grammar and style guide.

Sternberg, Robert J. The Psychologist's Companion, 3rd edition: A guide to scientific writing for students and researchers. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993. **Call # BF76.8.S73.1993**

Summary: This book is written for the professional writer as well as the advanced student, but it is a must no matter what. The chapters go in order of advancement in the field, starting out with writing the library research paper and writing the experimental research paper, while the final chapters cover writing a grant proposal, finding a book publisher and writing a lecture.

Web Sites

<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/student.htm#writing>

From the Teaching Social Psychology web site from North Central College of Illinois, this is the student tips section.

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/>

This is the “teaching tips’ section of the web site for the Association for Psychological Science, an excellent resource for teachers.

<http://www.depts.washington.edu/psywc/handouts.shtml>

The Psychology writing center web site from the University of Washington.