

AP[®] PSYCHOLOGY

2002 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

Five-year-old Jessie went to a fire station with her kindergarten class. When she got home, Jessie, who is in the preoperational stage of cognitive development, eagerly told the story of her adventure to her older brother. Describe how the following factors might have influenced the story she told. Be sure to define and provide an appropriate example of EACH factor.

- Egocentrism
- Observational learning
- Overregularization or overgeneralization in language
- Reconstructive memory
- Schema

General Considerations

1. No circular definitions (e.g., can't use the concepts to define themselves).
2. Robust examples not related to the fire station story can serve as definition.
3. Example points must pertain to Jessie's visit to fire house or Jessie telling her story.
4. The context of telling the story can be established in the first part of the essay and presumed to carry forward to rest of essay.
5. Watch out for perseveration of a prior concept that muddles clarity of next concept.

General Trap

Question doesn't ask for information about Piaget or preoperational stage of cognitive development.

Egocentrism

Point 1. Definition must involve a **perspective** not a personality trait. (The presumption is that a cognitive perspective is present unless a personality trait clearly is mentioned.)

- Inability to understand, explain, or share the perspective (point of view) of another.
- Difficulty putting oneself in another's place
- Assumption that others know what the child knows
- A child's belief that everything focuses on or revolves around the child
- A child not having a theory of mind

HINT: A definition by example is the sister/brother problem (i.e., a girl is asked "do you have a brother" and says yes, but says no to "does your brother have a sister?").

TRAPS: Don't score when child's personality clearly is being defined:

- Child is selfish, self-centered (circular definition), arrogant, inconsiderate, overconfident, or wants to impress
- Child's ego is large

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

Point 2. Example must relate to Jessie's egocentric perspective, not to her personality

- Tells of events that happened to all kids as though they happened only to Jessie
- Action in story depends upon Jessie's presence or actions
- May not explain story in detail or clearly because Jessie can't place self in brother's position
- Ignores interest or questions from brother to pursue egocentric perspective

TRAP: Jessie cannot fabricate details to capture more attention (e.g., tells her brother that she got to turn on the siren when she didn't. This is lying, not egocentrism.)

Observational learning

Point 3. Definition: Seeing someone act, and modeling or imitating the observed behavior (or knowing how to do what was observed)

HINTS:

- Common example used to define concept: Bandura's bobo doll study
- Must observe behavior and incorporate learning into own behavioral repertoire
- Species-specific modeling is acceptable as a definition by example (e.g., baby chimp imitating mother's behavior)

WARNING:

- Do not accept a simple restatement of definition (e.g., "observational learning occurs through observation"); however, accept definitions that use the terms if they are elaborated to include social and behavioral dimensions: "Observational learning is learning done by observing others." "Others" provides the social context and "learning done by" implies observing the overt behavior of another person.
- "Watching the world around us" is too vague—it does not specify a social learning situation or a behavioral outcome.

Point 4. Example: Example of an action or ability to act due to social learning.

- Jessie describes how she went down a fire pole after seeing a firefighter do it; stop-drop-and-roll, etc.
- Tells story in a way (e.g., with a mannerism) that was acquired through observation of another telling a story

TRAPS:

- Example that provides details from visit (e.g., fire trucks are red) not acquired through social learning
- Confusing observational learning with visual learning style (e.g., visual learning is better remembered)

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

Overregularization or overgeneralization in language

Point 5. Definition: The misapplication of a rule of grammar or syntax in language use.

HINT: An incomplete definition often is followed by an example (e.g., regularizing an irregular past tense or an irregular plural)

DO NOT COUNT

- Inadequate or an overextended vocabulary (e.g., saying “Hi doggie” to a sheep)

Point 6. Example: Misapplication of a grammar rule by creating a regular past tense for an irregular verb, creating a regular plural for an irregular noun, or adding the superlative “est” to an irregular adjective.

- Jessie said: “The *funnest* thing was watching the *firemans* who *slided* down the pole.”

Reconstructive memory

Point 7. Definition: Memory retrieval is not perfect. Retrieval failures or leading questions (framing) can induce additions or distortions to memory.

Two-part definition is required: 1) an origin (retrieval failure or framing) and 2) an outcome (addition to memory or an addition resulting in a distortion of memory).

HINTS:

- The deficit in memory must be replaced by the reconstructed memory.
- “Filling-the-gap” is sufficient to score the point. The origin is the gap in memory, which is filled by the reconstructed memory.
- “Remembering events that did not occur” is sufficient to score the point.

DON'T SCORE:

- Examples of selective attention, or forgetting without a later addition to memory.

Point 8. Example where the child accidentally introduces new elements or distorts what was actually witnessed.

- “Parts of Jessie’s story may not have occurred, but were created by her mind to fill the memory gap.”
- “Jessie’s brother asks her if it was fun to ring the bell, leading her to falsely remember doing it.”

TRAP:

Merely retelling the story out of chronological sequence is not a distortion of memory that is “reconstructed” by the addition of new information.

DON'T SCORE:

- Omission of elements of story (forgetting). New element must be inserted into story to “fill a gap.”
- Examples of explicit lies or fabricated elements of story, e.g., Jessie lied to make herself look good.

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

Schema

Point 9. Definition: A framework used to organize information.

A two-part answer is required: 1) a concept related to schema and 2) a process or application of the concept

- 1) Concept established by terms such as framework, mental set, prototype, stereotype, blueprint
- 2) Process/application established by terms such as organizing, categorizing, interpreting.

TRAPS:

- “A stereotype is a schema” does not score because it doesn’t provide a process or application.
- “A way to organize information” does not score because “way” does not refer to a psychological concept. Watch for an elaboration that may earn the point (e.g., “way of thinking that organizes information”).
- “Schemas organize events” does not score because it doesn’t provide a concept.

Point 10. Example: An existing schema is used in Jessie’s story or an example of how a schema is modified by Jessie’s experiences at fire station.

- “Jessie’s schema of firefighters is that they only fight fires—they don’t help in accidents.”
- “Jessie used to think all firefighters were men, but after seeing a woman firefighter, she changed her schema.”

HINT: An example of an existing schema that is resistant to change is scored.

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Question 2

Sample YY: Score High

9 points – all points with the exception of 1 - Egocentrism

- point 1: does NOT score because of “selfish view...views himself as most important part”
- point 2: “Jessie may have thought that the field trip was made solely because of her interest”
- point 3: “becomes acquainted with a task by watching another person perform the task”
- point 4: “learned how to slide down a pole by watching the firemen”
- point 5: “when a person applies a rule of grammar to all instances and does not take into account any exceptions to the rule”
- point 6: “Jessie may have said I goed to the fire station.”
- point 7: “supplying information that you think is appropriate when actual facts cannot be recalled”
- point 8: “told her brother that she ate a peanut butter and strawberry jelly sandwich when in fact it was a peanut butter and grape jelly sandwich”
- point 9: “a mental set for categorizing objects”
- point 10: “Jessie may have a schema for classifying all four legged black and white spotted things as cows...she may have assimilated dalmation into her schema and called it a cow”

Sample XX: Score Medium

4 points – Observational Learning points 3 & 4 – Reconstructive Memory points 7 & 8

- point 1: “the belief that you are the best” does not qualify – no point awarded
- point 2: example is based on being the best rather than being centered from one viewpoint – no score point awarded
- point 3: “learn through observation (monkey see; monkey do)”
- point 4: “saw how to turn on the engine of a fire truck so she then might want to show her brother how to do it”
- points 5 & 6: The concept is not based on exaggeration – no points awarded.
- point 7: “not remember fully and then just make up missing pieces”
- point 8: “Jessie could have said the building was bright red and new/clean. When in reality she didn’t remember the exact color...”
- points 9 & 10: “scheming” or fabricating for interest scores no definition or application points

Sample ZZ: Score Low

1 point – Observational Learning 4

- points 1 & 2: The reference to “ego” and “makes it seem more important” does not score for definition or application to the story.
- point 3: no definition stated – no point awarded
- point 4: “observing the firemen...and learning from their actions”
- points 5 & 6: Exaggeration of a story does not score for definition or application.
- points 7 & 8: “retelling” does not define or give an appropriate application for reconstructive memory
- points 9 & 10: not addressed – no points awarded

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YY

Egocentrism is a selfish view in which a person views himself as the most important part of a situation. Jessie may have thought that the field trip was made solely because of her interest in the fire station. Observational learning occurs when a person becomes acquainted with a task by watching another person perform the task. Jessie may have learned how to slide down a pole by watching the firemen demonstrate how to. Overgeneralization in language occurs when a person applies a rule of grammar to all instances and does not take into account any exceptions to the rule. Rather than saying "I went to the fire station," Jessie may have said "I goed to the fire station." This mistake would be an overgeneralization because Jessie added the suffix "-ed" to "go" ~~the~~ in order to make it past tense. Reconstructive memory is supplying information that you think is appropriate when actual facts cannot be recalled in a story. Jessie may not have remembered what she had for lunch and therefore told her brother that she ate a peanut butter and strawberry jelly sandwich when in fact it was a peanut butter and grape jelly sandwich. A schema is a mental set for categorizing objects and providing order to the world. Jessie may have a schema for classifying all four-legged, black and white spotted things as cows. If she had seen a dalmatian at the fire station, she may have assimilated it into her schema and called it a cow. She may have also accommodated for the difference and begun a new schema for dogs or dalmatians.

• Egocentrism: the belief that you are the best; or what you believe in is the best. You and everything you believe in is the best and is the right way.

Jessie might have thought and said that she could be the best firefighter. Then another example of the use of egocentrism could be that what she did and saw, was better than anything that any other person had ever witnessed she had went through the best.

• Observational learning: to learn through ^(or) observation. (monkey see; monkey do) She might have saw how to turn on the engine of a fire truck so she then might want to show her brother how to do it and then maybe experience it by starting up a car.

• Overregularization: to overexaggerate to make something sound like more than it really is. Jessie might have said that all the firefighters were big and stronger than anything. Maybe some were pretty big and strong, but they probably aren't the biggest and strongest things ever. She pretty much just generalized all the men (firefighters) as strong and that might not be the case.

• Reconstructive memory: to not remember something fully and then just make up the missing pieces OR to make some something sound or fit better. Jessie could have said the building was bright red and new/clean. When in reality she didn't really remember the exact color she just went off what she recalled from an old movie and substituted that. It could have been clean and new or that could also be something she reconstructed to make everything fit.

• Schema: to go off the subject because you want to sound more interesting. She could have schemed a little by just telling a story a firefighter told her and maybe

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she really was told a story but she would have spiced it
up a bit.

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Egocentrism - Tessie's ego's must have believed that going to the fire station was the greatest thing. Makes it seem more important

Observational learning - By Jessie going to the fire station she is learning by observing the firemen she get to see adults and learn from their actions.

Overregularization or overgeneralization in language - Tessie's story will become exaggerated because of the importance she sees in the fire station. So what she tells her brother will be a stretch of the truth.

Reconstructive memory - By telling her brother about what happened she will be walking back through what she did today to retell it to her brother.

Schemas