

AP[®] PSYCHOLOGY

2010 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

At a schoolwide pep rally preceding a big game at Williams James High School, each grade has a designated t-shirt color and seating area in the bleachers. Student leaders organize classes so that their colored shirts combine to form the school flag. The coach gives an exciting speech, the cheerleaders perform a routine, and the band plays the school song while the students sing in unison.

Explain the behavior and perceptions of the participants in the pep rally using the concepts below. Be sure to apply the concepts to the scenario in your explanation.

- Cocktail party effect
- Conformity
- Deindividuation
- Figure ground
- Occipital lobe
- Procedural memory
- Sympathetic nervous system

General Considerations

1. Answers must be presented in sentences, and sentences must be cogent enough for students' meaning to be apparent. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce students' scores, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word intended.
2. Within a point, students will not be penalized for misinformation unless it *directly contradicts* correct information that would otherwise have scored a point (e.g., "The sympathetic nervous system increases heart rate. The sympathetic nervous system decreases heart rate.").
3. Students can score points only if information is presented in *context*. This means that they must clearly convey which part of the question is being answered. For example, if a student correctly explains that "during the coach's speech, a student hears her name called out in the noise and turns her head," but does not identify this as the cocktail party effect, the point will not be earned. However, it may be possible to infer context from the structure or ordering of the essay.
4. Throughout the essay, definitions alone without application are not sufficient to score points, but definitions can establish and/or enhance the context for the example.
5. Because definitions alone do not score, if a student provides an incorrect definition but a correct application, score the point based on the application.
6. Every point requires students to relate their answers to the scenario. The scenario is not limited to the pep rally. The application could include experiences related to the various participants or activities that occur before, during or after the pep rally (football game, practice, etc.). Context may be established by using words such as "student/students," "participants," "the event," etc.
7. Students may address either a behavior or a perception for each point.
8. Examples provided for each of the following points are not to be considered exhaustive.

Point 1: Cocktail party effect

The example must demonstrate the ability to focus on one voice (or voices) while excluding other noises.

Score

- "Despite all the noise at the pep rally, the student could have heard his name said by another student two bleachers down."

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Question 2 (continued)

Point 2: Conformity

Students must provide a *specific example* of an individual (or individuals) doing something because *the larger group does*.

Score

- "All students sit and listen to the coach's speech because everyone else does."

Do not score

- "Going to the pep rally" or "taking part in the pep rally" without a specific behavior.
- Compliance (a direct request) or obedience to an authority figure.

Point 3: Deindividuation

The example must demonstrate an individual's (or individuals') loss of identity, self-restraint (e.g., "do something that they might not normally do"), individuality or sense of self *because he or she is in a group*.

Note: The example may illustrate conformity as long as deindividuation is established as a loss of identity in a group.

Score

- "The individual personalities would be lost by each student and they would act as a group."
- "Deindividuation is the loss of identity in a group with all the sophomores wearing green shirts."

Point 4: Figure ground

Students must provide *specific examples* to distinguish between a figure (e.g., cheerleaders, coach) and [back]ground (e.g., bleachers, court), *labeling* which example is the figure **OR** the ground.

Note: Auditory examples will also score.

Score

- "The school mascot stands out as the figure in his bright yellow costume against the gym floor."
- "A student can hear the coach's speech against the background of crowd noise."

Point 5: Occipital lobe

The student must establish that the occipital lobe is involved in vision.

Score

- "At the pep rally, the occipital lobe allows the people to see (or look)."
- "The occipital lobe allows the students to see the cheerleaders' performance."

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Question 2 (continued)

Point 6: Procedural memory

Students must illustrate memory for a skill, a step-by-step process or knowledge of *how to perform* a specific task.

Score

- "Cheerleaders show procedural memory when they perform their routine."

Do not score

- Declarative memories ("factual information," such as "where to sit," "what shirt to wear," or "words to the song").

Point 7: Sympathetic nervous system

Students must include a physiological component in the example (e.g., pupils dilate, heart rate increases, adrenaline is released).

Note: The words "arousal," "pumped up," "excited" or "energy" alone are not enough. Students must tie the application directly to the body.

Score

- "The exciting speech has caused the sympathetic nervous system to increase the heart rate."
- References to "fight or flight" or "arouses the body" also score.