**Article Review Assignment Instructions**

**Overview:**

The purpose of the **Article Review Assignment** is to guide you through some of the thought processes necessary to be a savvy consumer of primary sources of peer reviewed studies. This exercise will help you determine not only the findings in the article but also the larger theoretical framework in which the author has placed those findings, the limitations of the work, and the impact it has had on the scientific community. By answering the following questions, you will also have a clear understanding of the development and rationale of the research hypothesis. Finally, this process will help you learn to communicate your own ideas more effectively in your **Research Paper: Final Assignment** and perhaps your thesis.

**Instructions:**

Submit the completed form and a PDF of the article being reviewed. See the example below for a detailed explanation of the required material for each question.

1. APA reference of the article being reviewed.

*Write the reference for the article as if it were in the reference section of your paper.*

1. What is the research problem that is being investigated? What is the purpose of the research being conducted?

*Provide the “why” behind the paper. Why have they conducted this experiment? For example: “These experiments were designed to explore the role of second order conditioning in anxiety disorders.”*

1. What is the research question?

*The research question is more specific. What is the specific question or questions the article will answer as a result of the study or experiment. For example: “Are adolescents more sensitive to the memory imparting effects of alcohol?”*

1. How many sources are used in the introduction? List each one. Tell how many sentences are written about each source.

*Count the number of sources in the introduction and then list them. For each source give the number of sentences written about it.*

1. Outline the introduction (Divide the introduction into thematic groups with their own subheadings—and include what information is provided about each source. The end of your outline should point you to the research question and design—these need to be included in your outline).  
   *Think about the introduction as a whole and then break it down into its thematic groups. Be sure to include the research question in the outline.*
2. *Prevalence and cost of drug addiction*
   1. *Global*
   2. *US*
3. *Relapse*
   1. *Prevalence*
   2. *Description*
   3. *Cause*
   4. *Prevention*
4. *Spontaneous Recovery*
   1. *Animal studies*
      1. *Dr. X first described it in rats*
      2. *Theoretical explanation* 
         1. *Initial explanation is….*
         2. *Recent studies suggest that it is best explained in terms of …..*
   2. *Human studies*
      1. *Consistent with animal findings.*
5. *Spontaneous Recovery used to explain drug relapse*
   1. *Animal studies*
      1. *Stress*
      2. *Small dose induction*
   2. *Human studies*
      1. *Stress*
      2. *Small dose induction*
         1. *Prescription pain medication*
6. *Research question: Could stress management help reduce relapse in individuals recovering from substance us?*
   1. *Hypothesis of the writers*
   2. *Support for hypothesis*
   3. *Predicted results*
7. What are two (or more) theories that are discussed in the introduction? How are they used to motivate (or set up) the research question? Do the authors agree or disagree with these theories?

*Simply restate the theories discussed in the introduction in your own words. State how these theories are driving the research questions. If the authors’ hypothesis is correct, will it support the theory or be inconsistent with the theory? You should have a good idea of where the authors stand based on the evidence presented and the arguments they are making.*

1. What previous research (not theories) have been conducted on this topic? How do these previous studies relate to the current research question?

*Focus on the experiments cited in the introduction. In your own words, give a short summary of what has already been done and then explain how those findings relate to the current research question.*

1. Why is the proposed research the logical next step (that is—what rationale and motivation) is there for this research? What hole in psychological knowledge is this study following?

*Restate/summarize the authors’ rationale for the research in your own words. How is the current research question a logical progression of the previous findings? Answering this question will require that you think about the authors’ rationale for their research. They should have made a strong case for why this is the logical next step as well as pointed out that answering this question will fill in an important gap in the literature.*

1. How is the research question operationalized? (First, identify the abstract constructs being studied. Next identify the concrete way these are being observed or measured. This should include your IV and DV.)

*A construct is an abstract explanatory variable that is not directly observable (e.g., memory). The concrete way the construct is measured will point you to the dependent variable (DV). For example, if the paper is concerned with memory, the DV may be the number of items recalled. The independent variable (IV) could be the amount of sleep each participant was allowed the night before the test. Remember that we cannot directly measure many of the constructs that are studied in psychology, so it is important that we identify how they are being operationalized in each research study.*

1. What is the research design? (I.e., between or within subjects, what type of statistical tests were used, what were the levels of each variable?)

*This information will be in the methods section of your paper. Be sure to provide enough detail to describe how the study was designed.*

1. Describe the results (but not their broader implications). Were the results significant? Which ones? Do these support or not support the hypothesis?

*Describe the results in your own words. For example: Group X was able to recall significantly more words than Group Y. This finding supports the hypothesis that manipulation Y would reduce recall.*

1. Outline the discussion.

*Divide the discussion into thematic groups with their own subheadings. This should probably begin with a summary of the results and the previous sources. How many sources are used in the general discussion? Summarize the sources used and how they relate to the discussion and the research question.*

1. What limitations are mentioned? Why are these limitations theoretically interesting?

*Limitations can be found in the discussion section of the paper. If a limitation is that they didn’t have X control group, then explain in your own words why that is important. Does does it change the interpretation of the findings?*

1. What future research is anticipated? Why is the future research theoretically interesting?

*Describe in your own words the future research that the author anticipates. Discuss why these studies would be of theoretical importance. How would they further our understanding of the construct or theory in question?*

1. What is the Eigenfactor of the journal that published this article? Is it high or low? Do you think that the impact factor influences the quality of the article (or vise-versa)?

*The Eigenfactor is one measure of the impact of a journal. If you are unfamiliar with Eigenfactors, please see the* ***Article Review Resources section*** *for a short description. You can find the Eigenfactor for your article at the Eigenfactor website. Type in the name of your journal, find it in the list of results and report the EF value. Remember the total of all Eigenfactors is 100 and the highest individual Eigenfactor currently belongs to Science (1.22).*

1. How many times has this article been cited?

*There are many ways to find this information. Some database site will give you this information or you can go to Web of Science and select a “Cited Reference Search”. This information should give you a rough idea of the impact this article has had on the field.*

See the **Article Review Resources section** under the **Article Review Assignment page**.

Be sure to review the **Article Review Grading Rubric** before beginning the **Article Review Assignment**.