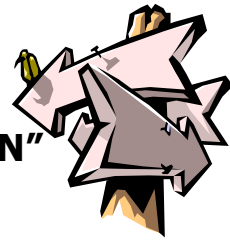


"ANSWERING THE 18 MARK QUESTION"



Right. So you have the knowledge – you know everything there is to know about the 6 units covered (*CAUTION* – if you don't know your stuff you'll find it impossible to answer the essay question effectively – so make sure you are confident in your knowledge of the material).

But how do you answer the question without just simply blurting out everything that you know?

1. All the essay questions require you to be *evaluative* and use those AO2 skills. To evaluate is to 'weigh up the value' of something and every question will be asking you to do this in one way or another. This means you will need to know the good, the bad and the ugly points of every area we look at in psychology (studies – APFCCs, theories and approaches).
2. Get to know the way in which questions are asked and what *they really mean*. Look at the question and underline what the question is ABOUT (the content) – this will probably be the keywords of the question (e.g., eating disorders, ethical issues, workplace stressors). Then circle the words that tell you WHAT TO DO (e.g. describe, compare, consider).
3. Below is a list of the commonly used terms. These tell you what the examiners want you to DO.
4. The words that you underline (the content) are usually the words which you will explain briefly (this will help towards your 6 AO1 marks). The words that you circle are going to identify your argument and then you will decide what evidence to use.
5. The list should help you to identify the essential 'argument' that is within the question. It maybe that it is obvious because you are asked to *evaluate* two theories - in which case you can weigh up the pros and cons of each in their ability to explain an area of psychology (for example – two different models of abnormality). You can use research studies as evidence to back up your points.

It maybe less obvious – for example if you are asked 'To what extent...' then you need to show how well a theory and/or study explains an area of psychology (the pros) and also why the theory and/or study is limited (the cons). So, 'To what extent can the validity of obedience research be justified' – asks you to explain validity (internal and external) for AO1 and then to look at obedience research (Milgram) and weigh up the pros and cons of this study in terms of how *valid* it was.

6. Many questions start with a quote. The quote will offer one side of an argument and it is impressive to show the examiner that you recognise this and are aware of the alternative perspective. Attempt to refer back to the quote in your answer.

REMEMBER ALWAYS TO REFER BACK TO THE QUESTION – THIS SHOWS THE EXAMINER YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT YOUR ANSWER AND IT WILL HELP YOU KEEP ON TRACK.

TERM	EXPLANATION
Account	Give reasons for
Analyse	Separate into parts/factors
Assess	Say how important it is
Compare	Show similarities/differences – say which is better
Consider	Take into account – weigh up advantages/disadvantages
Contrast	Look for differences between
Define	Give the meaning of
Demonstrate	Show how – prove with examples
Describe	Write in detail about the characteristics of
Differentiate	Explain the difference between – distinguish between
Discuss	Describe the important aspects – pointing out the pros and cons
Evaluate	Judge the importance or success of
Examine	Investigate – enquire into
Explain	Make clear – give reasons for
How far...?	Present and evaluate evidence for and against
Illustrate	Give examples
Outline	Indicate the important aspects – omit minor detail
Relate	Show the connections between
State	Set down briefly the main points
Summarise	Bring together the main points
To what extent ...?	How true is it to say that – give evidence
Trace	Show the development of

Look at the following essay questions – identify the AO1 and the AO2 part of the question. (Remember the AO1 is 6 marks max – so don't get sidetracked with this part.) In the space below rewrite the question indicating what it is asking you to do. Then briefly outline what evidence you would use.

"Psychologists disagree sharply about the developmental effects of daycare."

Assess the extent to which research (theories and/or studies) supports the view that day care has negative effects on childrens' cognitive and/or social development. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

Consider the extent to which psychological theories have been successful in explaining attachments. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

Outline research into memory and consider the extent to which it has helped our understanding of eyewitness testimony. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

Consider the extent to which research into the process of repression enables us to explain forgetting. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

"According to some theories all humans are born with basic needs and drives such as hunger and thirst and it is the process of satisfying these that leads to the formation of attachments in infants."

Consider the extent to which psychological theories have been successful in explaining attachments. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

Outline and evaluate Bowlby's Maternal Deprivation Hypothesis. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

"To be effective, stress management techniques must target both the psychological and the physical aspects of stress."

**Consider the effectiveness of physical approaches to stress management.
(18)**

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

To what extent does research (theories and/or studies) show a relationship between stress and physical illness? (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

"Despite its weaknesses, the psychodynamic model is still useful in understanding and treating psychological disorders"

Outline key features of the psychodynamic model of abnormality and consider its strengths and/or limitations. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

"Attempts to define abnormality are always limited by cultural differences."

Consider how definitions of abnormality may be influenced by cultural differences. (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

"Social psychologists have sometimes conducted studies that would not be ethically acceptable today."

To what extent is it appropriate to judge social influence research carried out by psychologists (eg. Milgram, Asch) as unethical? (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?:

Outline some criticisms of majority influence research and consider whether these are fair? (18)

What are you being asked to do?:

How will you do it?: