

PSY 150: Writing Assignment #2

If you complete the assignment by the due date, meet all the guidelines, and communicate your ideas with clarity and accuracy, you will receive 100 points.

Paper Topic:

Imagine that you've been asked to talk about a drug of your choice and its effects to a third grade class. To make a coherent presentation you will need to (1) explain how the nervous system passes messages to different parts of the body and (2) explain how one of the following drugs: caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, crack, Ecstasy or marijuana affects the nervous system and body. Your explanation should be made in terms that a third grader can understand. Refer to pages 327-330 in your text for Jean Piaget's perspective on what third graders (nine year-olds) can and cannot understand.

Some questions to guide your thinking on this assignment:

How is the nervous system structured? What is the structure of a neuron? What electrical and chemical events occur within and between neurons to enable communication in the nervous system?

In what category of drugs does your chosen drug belong? How does the drug affect the nervous system, that is, what is its *mechanism of action*: Does the drug have an effect on Reuptake? Does the drug bind with certain neurotransmitter receptor sites? Does the drug stimulate neurotransmitter release? Which neurotransmitters are affected? What are the long-term effects of the drug on neurons (or the central nervous system) or on the body?

Format:

Your paper must be:

- 1 to 3 pages long
- Typed
- Double-spaced
- Use 1-inch margins
- Font: use Times
- Font size: use 12-point
- Saved in Rich Text Format (RTF) and submitted as an email attachment
- Your name should appear at the top-right of each page

Evaluation and grading:

This writing assignment is worth 100 points. You will be graded on how well you address the requirements presented in the writing guide under “Paper Topic.” You will also be graded on proper mechanics (grammar, syntax, spelling) used to communicate your ideas. Most likely, your word processing program has a grammar and spell checker. I encourage you to use that tool before you submit your assignment.

Submitting Your Work:

Save your work in Rich Text Format (RTF). To do this in Microsoft Word, use your mouse pointer to select the “File” menu. Select the “Save As...” menu option. In the window that appears, find the “Format” drop-down menu. Click on this menu and select “Rich Text Format”. Now give your file a filename and select a location to save the file. Finally, click on the “Save” button. Email your document as an attachment to your instructor at: blw@csun.edu