

Guidelines for the Written Analysis

The written analysis is basically a summary of your group presentation and should be no longer than 3 pages. Pages 1 and 3 must be in paragraph form with complete sentences (no bullets). The format is as follows:

Page 1. Summarize the key points of the article. This includes the background/rationale for the study, the main methods used, key findings, and conclusions.

Page 2. Outline the presentation. This should be a “play by play” summary of what your group plans to do and why. For example, a presentation by students Juan, Maria, and Dan on “Gender differences in the use of social aggression” (rumor spreading, gossip) might be organized in this way:

Minutes 0:00-5:00 Class Activity

This activity will get the class familiar with social aggression and personalize the material. Juan will start out reminding students that the textbook shows teenagers use different forms of aggression to resolve their conflicts. He will then define social aggression so everyone knows what the study is about. Next, Dan and Maria will ask the students to think about a time they experienced or witnessed social aggression. Then, they will ask the age when this happened, whether girls or boys were using social aggression, and why there might be a gender difference.

5:01-12:00 Article Summary

We will distribute as simple handout (large type with bullets) that summarizes the study. We will go over these main points by taking turns stating the study purpose (Dan), main method(s) (Maria), findings and conclusions (Juan).

12:01-15:00 Critical Analysis

We will point out what we believe are the main strengths (Juan) and weaknesses (Dan) of the research. Maria will also briefly describe a study we would like to see done that would help to overcome one of the main weaknesses.

15:01-20:00 Tic-Tac-Toe Quiz Game

We will divide the class down the middle into teams “X” and “O”. Each side will be asked True or False questions about the study and will send their answer using an online poll via cell phones. For every correct answer, a team gets to put an X or O on the Tic-Tac-Toe board. We will use Power Point to show/read the questions and the Whiteboard for Tic-Tac-Toe. The side that wins will get a prize (e.g., homemade cookies, healthy snack, verbal praise, etc.). Then, we’ll open it up to the class for questions or discussion.

Page 3. Demonstrate your critical thinking skills. This final page should specify areas of the study that your group found to be scientifically weak, questions that were not answered, points that generated disagreement among your group members, and/or that could be done differently to improve the investigation.

Guidelines for the In-Class Presentation

1. Be Organized and Clear. Present with the goal of having the class understand the rationale, findings, and conclusions of the article. This requires that the entire presentation be organized with each person knowing their role. You should do some rehearsing. Often being clear will require you to “translate” the research into “plain English” that your classmates will understand.

Remember that the material from the assigned articles will be included in examinations. So, the clearer the presentation of the article, the more you will help each other learn and prepare for the exams.

2. Offer Praise and Criticism. Offer your thoughts about the strengths and weaknesses of the article. When a study is strong, challenging, or insightful be sure to draw attention to these good points. If a study is weak in some areas or leaves important questions unanswered, then you should note that too. Try to offer a solution to the problems and/or directions for future work.

3. Situate the article in the context of the course by making reference to material from the text, lecture, discussion, etc. in your presentation when it is appropriate and relevant.

4. Be creative and engage the class! Remember that the presentation is relatively short and some of your time should be focused on getting the class involved in what has been presented. Share the excitement of the research (as if you were the authors). Sometimes visual aids, critical thinking exercises, games, online polls, etc. are useful. Note that our classroom is equipped with most everything you may need (i.e., wireless, LCD projector, whiteboard, etc.).

5. When your presentation is finalized, please upload your materials (e.g., PP slides, handouts, etc.) to the Canvas module titled “Student Uploads.” All students can then reference your materials and use them to prepare for the exams.

In-Class Presentation Check List

- Have you...?
 - Read your article and met your group members well in advance of the presentation date
 - Highlighted features that stood out to you
 - Made an outline of your presentation/made sure each group member is involved
 - Scheduled a time to see the instructor the week prior
 - Practiced and timed your presentation
 - Uploaded materials to the “Students Presentations” folder on Canvas
 - Made sure that all of your material is ready and working so that no time is wasted setting up or conducting activities
- Make the presentation your own. Do not just repeat the text from the article. Instead, interpret the article for your classmates and present clearly using “plain English”
- Some things to think about:
 - What was the research question(s)/what were the researchers trying to find out?
 - How was the study conducted? Who were the participants?
 - What were the findings? Were these surprising?
 - Where could the study have improved (different subjects, important variables were missing, conclusions were not appropriate, etc.?)
 - Do you agree or disagree with the article’s conclusions? Why?
 - What studies could be done to follow up on this topic of research?
 - How does this fit into the class content?
- Remember! Your peers are the target audience and will also be grading you. So, apply the article to something the class can relate to and find interesting:
 - Personal reflection, YouTube video, news stories, movies, songs, pictures, Internet articles
- Get the class involved!
 - Visual aids—PowerPoint, posters, videos, write on the whiteboard, etc.
 - Handouts, activities, and “mini games” like quizzes, game shows, skits, debates, discussions

A note on working together... It is common for groups to encounter challenges working together. In fact, one purpose of this assignment is for you to learn more about group dynamics and develop your teamwork skills working with others and solving problems collaboratively. However, if there is a problem with the group dynamics that cannot be resolved by the group (e.g., a member will not participate or refuses to cooperate), then you must notify the instructor about the issue well in advance of the presentation date. The day before the presentation is much too late!