

PSYCH1140 - Breaking down an essay prompt

Tuesday, 8 February 2022

Group X

Members:

Assignment 1 was based largely on these two texts:

- [Schachter, D., L., Addis, D., R., & Buckner, R., L. \(2007\). Remembering the past to imagine the future: the prospective brain. Nature Reviews: Neuroscience, 8, 657-661.](#)
- [Zacks, J., M., Speer, N., K., Swallow, K., M., Braver, T., S., & Reynolds, J. R. \(2007\). Event perception: a mind-brain perspective. Psychological Bulletin, 133\(2\), 273-293.](#)

In assignment 1 you were asked to write a 2-page essay to answer the following prompt:

*Based on the readings, what is one important property of the brain that allows us to process and make sense of experience? Does this property suggest that representations of past events (memory) are the same as representations of future plans? Discuss two pieces of evidence from the reading that support your position.*

In your group, think back at the two readings, their main positions and claims and then to the essay prompt. Then, try to think of how you would structure your answer. To facilitate the discussion, go through the following questions.

1. In your own words, what is/ are the main question(s) posed in the assignment prompt? Do not copy and paste the assignment prompt, write the questions in your own words.

2. Think about the first part of the prompt more closely: *Based on the readings, what is one important property of the brain that allows us to process and make sense of experience?*
  - a. Is there a common property about how the brain uses memories that both papers are suggesting? If yes, what is this common property of the brain? If not, what are the different properties of the brain that each paper proposes?
  - b. Are the two papers proposing that the brain property that both/ each are talking about function on the same timescale? What is/ are the timescale(s)?
3. Think about the second part of the prompt more closely: *Does this property suggest that representations of past events (memory) are the same as representations of future plans?* Based on your answer for question 2, how exactly does the brain property work on each timescales? To answer this question, you can illustrate it with examples provided by the papers.
4. Think about the last part of the prompt more closely: *Discuss two pieces of evidence from the reading that support your position.* Provide one evidence (e.g., a specific study mentioned in the paper - what was found or a theory proposed) drawn from each paper to support your answer for question 3.
5. Based on your answers to questions 1-4, create an outline for the body of the write-up. Focus on the main body and leave the introduction and conclusion out.