

## Chapter 7: Essays and Reflective Writing

Test your knowledge of Chapter 7: Essays and Reflective Writing by answering the following multiple-choice questions. You can find the answers to each question at the end of this document.

- 1 How are essays different from other forms of academic writing?
  - a Essays use academic sources, citations and a reference list.
  - b Essays are designed to display an argument.
  - c Essays display an argument through writing techniques.
  - d Essays are a prose form, using citations and a reference list.
  
- 2 Background information is included in an introduction as a means of:
  - a making the introduction more professional.
  - b giving the reader information about the topic.
  - c beginning the argument in the essay.
  - d providing a context for the topic.
  
- 3 An argument has to present the author's position and provide supporting evidence. Choose the best argument statement for the topic: 'Listening to a lecture is difficult for university students. Discuss.'
  - a All students experience some difficulties listening to a lecture as the information is complex and there is little or no interaction with the lecturer. However, some students, particularly those who have not had much experience in listening in English, for example Chinese and Korean students, are especially disadvantaged.
  - b All students experience some difficulties listening to a lecture. However, some students, particularly those who have not had much experience in listening in English, are especially disadvantaged.
  - c This essay argues that students experience difficulties listening to a lecture. Lecture information is complex. Students cannot interact with the lecturer to check on understanding. Chinese and Korean students are especially disadvantaged.
  - d This essay will examine, first, the experience of all students listening to a lecture, then the particular experience of Chinese and Korean students.
  
- 4 How does the body of a short essay display the essay argument?
  - a It provides an introduction and conclusion that state the argument clearly.
  - b The paragraphs are logically related to each other as a means of showing the argument.
  - c Topic sentences are used to show how the ideas in each paragraph are logically linked together as an argument.
  - d All of the above.
  
- 5 It is often a good idea to rewrite the introduction once you have finished writing an essay. Why?
  - a The introduction is the least important part of the essay, so it is **first written in a draft style**, then rewritten once the essay is completed.
  - b The process of writing the essay makes the argument clearer to the author, so the argument statement may need to be rewritten.
  - c The introduction has to be different from the conclusion and this is often difficult to achieve; hence a rewriting of the introduction is required.

- d Rewriting the introduction helps students begin the essay with a strong statement of the essay topic.
- 6 Why do we focus on our external and internal processes when we reflect on our learning?
- Internal and external processes reveal all the details of how something occurred.
  - The content of the situation is not of interest as it cannot be changed.
  - Our focus has to be on the features of the situation that allow us to learn.
  - By focussing on internal and external processes we can learn how to change what others do.
- 7 Why do we use course concepts in reflection?
- Course concepts allow us to name and describe significant features of what we are experiencing.
  - We have to show we know all the course content, including course concepts and theories.
  - Course concepts are part of theories.
  - Reflection involves memorising course concepts.
- 8 Imagine I have experienced difficulty working with a student (Karla) on a project. My plan to help improve the situation is: I will insist that Karla does her work. To make this a better plan, I need to:
- be more specific by saying exactly what I want Karla to do.
  - also make a plan about what I will do.
  - not worry about Karla and concentrate on how I do my work.
  - be more specific by saying how I will insist that Karla do her work.
- 9 When you reflect about your learning, the aim is to:
- become perfect by being aware of the processes involved.
  - improve learning by being aware of the processes involved.
  - learn the course concepts and theories.
  - pass the assignment by showing you know all the processes involved.
- 10 A reflective essay is different from a formal academic essay in that it:
- uses description of personal experiences.
  - is not organised to show an argument.
  - does not use the academic literature.
  - uses colloquial language.
- 11 A case study is a story of an actual event or situation designed to help you learn how to apply course concepts to 'the real world'. Below is a very short case study.
- David had been asked to keep a reflective journal on his tutorial participation. The aim was to let all students learn how to participate more actively in a tutorial. David wrote an entry after each tutorial, carefully dating it. He also wrote in detail about what each student actually said in the tutorial. He noted that about five students dominated the tutorial discussions. He commented that they were obviously the brighter students. He also found that about half of the students made no contribution at all. He named these students, including himself among them.
- What is the problem with how David kept his reflective journal?  
Which of the following is the best answer to the above question?
- There is nothing wrong with David's reflective journal, as a reflective journal is only meant to be a means of helping a student learn.
  - David did not write in the manner required for a reflective journal. He only described the content and not the processes (e.g. he did not describe the external processes of how the students who spoke a lot dominated the discussion, nor did

he describe his internal processes in terms of how he felt). His journal would not help him learn how to participate in a tutorial.

- c There is no problem with David's reflective journal because he wrote after each tutorial, he dated each entry and he gave a rich description of what happened at each tutorial. He described in detail what each of the students said. Moreover, he noted the names of the students who did not speak much. Students are often asked to write a reflective journal as a means of helping them to learn. While it is usually not assessed, if it is, the student needs to be able to trust the tutor with the content.
- d A reflective journal has to mainly focus on the internal processes involved in any situation. David's journal did not do this.

## Answers

- 1 C
- 2 D
- 3 A
- 4 C
- 5 B
- 6 C
- 7 A
- 8 D
- 9 B
- 10 A
- 11 B