

What are my tasks for this assignment?

- (1) **Identify an Educational Psychology issue that is personally interesting and conducive to critical thinking.**
- (2) **Identify the audience for your assignment. Potential audiences include: Parents, administrators, K-12 students, teaching colleagues, and/or pre-service teachers.**
- (3) **Meet with the professor to discuss your topic** (complete the *proposal sheet* on page 6)
- (4) **Locate at least two additional resources in addition to the text and class discussions**
  - a. It is expected that you reference these sources both in the text and in a “Reference” section. See page three for APA reference style.
- (4) **Write rough drafts that include the following sections. MAKE SURE TO READ THE RUBRIC (page 4) FOR FULL DETAILS ON CONTENT.**
  - a. Explain your *issue* in a manner that demonstrates understanding of the key components **and** align your assignment’s scope and presentation for a targeted audience
    - i. Have you: *Clearly identified the issue, why it is important, and the thesis of the assignment?*
    - ii. Have you: *Identified the audience for the assignment? Presented the assignment in a way that is appropriate for this demographic?*
  - b. Provide evidence related to issue identified in the first step
    - i. Have you: *Clearly summarized evidence from valid sources?*
  - c. Interpret/evaluate evidence, and question evidence
    - i. Have you: *Thoroughly questioned viewpoints provided by experts and ensured the content accuracy?*
  - d. Consider audience & influence of context by analyzing your own and others’ assumptions
    - i. Have you: *(1) Identified the audience for your assignment; and (2) Analyzed your own and others’ assumptions, as well as evaluated the context of the evidence?*
  - e. Arrive at a justified conclusion based on the issue, evidence, and analysis of the context
    - i. Have you: *Arrived at a conclusion that is logical and reflects the evaluation of evidence?*
  - f. Provide an assignment that offers readability and convention?
    - i. Have you: *Created an assignment that is inviting with no mechanical errors and an inviting fluent style?*
- (5) **Provide and receive peer reviews**
- (6) **Rewrite drafts after peer reviews**
- (7) **Submit final assignment**

Why am I doing this assignment?

The most effective teachers make a commitment to engage in lifelong learning, a process that is reflected in this assignment.

What is an appropriate length and format for my assignment?

Quality over quantity! As a rough guideline, however, papers should roughly be 8-12 double-spaced pages. Use size 12, Times font, double-space, number the pages, put a title in bold on top of the first page, include headings, and write the honor pledge on the last page. ***You do NOT need to write a paper. Consult with the professor if you would like to use another medium to demonstrate critical thinking on a topic of personal interest.***

### What are the deadlines for this assignment?

- **Rough draft due:** November 21<sup>st</sup>
- **Peer Feedback:** November 21<sup>st</sup>
- **Final draft due:** December 5<sup>th</sup>

### How will this assignment be evaluated?

- Please see the rubric on page 4

### What support sources are available?

- Writing Center: The Writing Center offers opportunities to work with a peer-tutor one-on-one and receive on-the-spot feedback. This peer teaching facility helps clarify your thinking, structure your papers, develop evidence, hone your style, and practice self-editing skills (it is not a place that will only proofread). Please schedule your appointment at [www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter](http://www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter) (you can make appointments online!). Or, call x6027 for appointments. Tutoring will be available in 232 Confer (the Writing Center), 211 LIB, and the Diversity Center. Please look at the website for schedules.
- Journals: You have been journaling throughout the semester and these entries serve as a good starting point to identify issues that are personally interesting.
- Professor: The most important aspect of this assignment is that the your chosen topic has personal relevance. In other words, choose a topic that is interesting to you! However, it may be difficult to progress from a broad topic that is personally interesting to a specific topic that is appropriate for the scope of this assignment. The professor is more than happy to provide feedback at any point during this assignment, particularly during the initial stage.
- Sample papers: See sample papers on the course website.

*Potential Topics:*

1. To “teach” or not to “teach”, that is the question. Disputes about the role of instructional guidance in teaching have been prevalent over the last 50 years. Some experts believe that the most effective classroom experiences entail unguided or partly guided instruction (also called “discovery learning”, “inquiry learning”, “experiential learning”, and “constructivist learning”). Other experts have argued that partly guided instruction is only effective *after* the teacher has provided direct, explicit instruction. They believe that small group work and independent discovery are effective for *practicing* recently learned skills and knowledge. Where do your thoughts on effective teaching for your particular development group and content area fall on this continuum?
2. Some have suggested schools’ concern for children’s moral development and their self-esteem is misplaced, and the business of the school is to teach knowledge and cognitive skills. What is your position regarding this issue? Please provide an overview of at least one theory of morality and evidence that justifies your position.
3. A fundamental goal in the field of educational psychology is to identify how theories can inform pedagogy. How does the field of educational psychology inform your particular domain and/or developmental level? In order to answer this question, please reference at least two theories (cognitive theories and/or motivational theories). For example, you could discuss the implications of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory for effective pedagogy in teaching music. This approach would call for a discussion on the role of scaffolding and fading in teaching music.
4. There are two conflicting arguments on the role of motivation in the classroom:
  - a. *Take care of learning, and motivation will take care of itself*
  - b. *Take care of motivation, and learning will take care of itself*To what extent do you support one or both of these arguments? In order to answer this question, please make sure to discuss: (1) Three different explanations of motivation (for example: attributions, self-efficacy, intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation) and; (2) how these explanations for motivation may affect teaching within your particular content area and developmental group.
5. There has been a long-time and on-going debate about the relative value of teaching students *content* (e.g., concepts) versus *processes* (e.g., self-regulation, critical thinking, problem solving, metacognitive skills, etc). Which should schools emphasize more? Why? What do you think will be most important for your particular developmental group and content area?
6. How can intelligence theories be used in academic settings? In order to examine this broad issue, consider the following case study and answer the below questions in your paper:

Gavin has more trouble in school than many of his peers, particularly with word problems in math and other areas that are not tangible. In spite of his high motivation, he still struggles, and new situations and problems “throw him” more than they do his classmates. In order to succeed, he needs a lot of practice, and his approach is somewhat more “mechanical” than that of his peers. He comments,

“I need to be able to ‘see it’ to understand it. Some of these ideas are just too abstract for me. Who cares what caused Columbus to want to go to the Far East? I can get it though, if I get enough practice.”

When he gets frustrated, he retreats to his room where he plays guitar; he has even done some of his own arrangements. Gavin is very skilled at working with people, and some of his peers turn to him as an arbitrator when clashes occur in club and other organizational meetings.

  - Consider Gavin’s intelligence based on Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Assess Gavin’s intelligence on this basis.
  - Consider Gavin’s intelligence according to Sternberg’s Triarchic Theory of Intelligence. Assess Gavin’s intelligence on this basis.
  - In your opinion, which theory of theory of intelligence (Sternberg or Gardner’s theory) has more educational validity? In other words, which theory do you believe is more effective in explaining intelligence?

## APA References:

### Book

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#### *In reference section:*

Author's last name, Author's first initial, Author's middle initial. (date of publication). *Title of book*,  
Location of publisher: Publisher's name.

Boekaerts, M., Pintrich, P., & Zeidner, M. (2000). *Handbook of self-regulation*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

#### *In Text:*

Boekaerts, Pintrich, and Zeidner (2000) suggest that the field of self-regulated learning research consists of many camps and perspectives that sometimes focus on different constructs.

The field of self-regulated research consists of many camps and perspectives that sometimes focus on different constructs (Boekarts, Pintrich, & Zeidner, 2000).

### Article

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#### *In reference section:*

Author's last name, Author's first initial, Author's middle initial. (date of publication). Title of article,  
*Title of journal, journal number, page numbers.*

Moos, D.C., & Azevedo, R. (2009). Learning with computer-based learning environments: A literature review of computer self-efficacy, *Review of Educational Research, 79(2)*, 576-601.

#### *In Text:*

Research conducted by Moos and Azevedo (2009) suggests that computer self-efficacy is a critical construct to consider when examining learning with emerging technology.

Research suggests that computer self-efficacy is a critical construct to consider when examining learning with emerging technology (Moos & Azevedo, 2009).

### Website

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#### *In reference section:*

Author's last name, Author's first initial, Author's middle initial. (date of publication OR date of retrieval). Title OR description of document. Retrieval date statement, website address.

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites, 149. Retrieved May 2, 2006, from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>.

#### *In text:*

As suggested by Bernstein (2002), there are 10 important tips to consider when designing a website.

It has been suggested that there are 10 important tips to consider when designing a website (Bernstein, 2002).

### Interview:

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Name of the person you interviewed, personal communication, date of interview

*In text:* As noted in an interview (D. Moos, personal communication, May 20, 2011)....

*In reference section:* D. Moos, personal communication, May 20, 2011

**EDU 330: Educational Psychology  
Critical Thinking Assignment Rubric**

<b>SECTION OF ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Explanation of Issues AND Audience</b>	Issue/problem to be considered is stated without clarification or description. AND/OR Assignment not clearly designed for a specific audience	Issue/problem to be considered is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown. AND Assignment identifies audience but lacks clear connection	Issue/problem to be considered is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions. AND Assignment identifies audience and offers connection	Issue/problem to be considered is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding. AND Assignment identifies audience and offers sophisticated connections
<b>Evidence &amp; Accuracy of content</b>	Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question... ...and/or.... Substantial inaccuracies with the content (3+ instances)	Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning ...and/or.... several inaccuracies with content (2 or 3 instances)	Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning ...and/or.... minor inaccuracy with content (1 instance)	Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly. ...and... content accurate throughout
<b>Influence of context and assumptions</b>	Limited or no awareness of assumptions and/or context	Emerging awareness of assumptions and/or context: Identifies few relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Awareness of assumptions and/or context: Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Sophisticated awareness of assumptions and content: Thoroughly analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.
<b>Readability &amp; Convention</b>	Assignment's meaning is impeded due to many errors in grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation, as well as awkward phrasing and unsophisticated vocabulary.	Assignment is readable, though there are several errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, as well as the occasional awkward phrasing and unsophisticated vocabulary.	Assignment is readable, though there are minor errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, as well as a few awkward phrasing and unsophisticated vocabulary.	Assignment is inviting; there are very few or no mechanical errors and there is an inviting fluent style created through sophisticated vocabulary.
<b>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</b>	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.

## Critical Thinking Proposal Sheet

*Directions:* Please fill out the below questions and bring this sheet to your individual meeting with the professor

1. What is your topic? What is the specific question you are addressing with this assignment?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who is the audience for this paper? For example, is it designed for parents? Administrators? Teacher colleagues? K-12 students? Pre-service teachers? How will the audience affect the presentation of the assignment?

3. What are some potential resources?

4. What challenges do you foresee in completing this assignment?

6. Identify a date that you would like to complete each of the following, given your other responsibilities and the deadline for this particular assignment.

(1) Refine the topic, question, and audience:

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(2) Identify at least two resources:

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Gather information from resources:

\_\_\_\_\_

(4) Summarize and evaluate evidence from resources:

\_\_\_\_\_

(5) Write an outline for the assignment:

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6. Do you have any other questions, concerns, etc related to this assignment that you would like to discuss with the professor?