

“Why Correct?” and “Why Wrong?”

Critical Thinking Study Guide and Exam Question Formats for Content-Heavy Courses
Examples designed by Dr. Carol A. Gittens

Example #1 - Developmental Psychology

TYPE ONE “Why Correct” Questions: Approximately 80% of the questions will follow this format:

1. you will be asked to circle the letter indicating the correct answer for the question.

This will be worth 1 point.

2. you will be asked to give a brief explanation for why the answer you selected is the correct answer. The explanation will be worth 2 points.

“Why Correct” Example Question: According to Piaget, infants between the ages of 4 and 8 months act on the world through

- a. their inborn reflexes.
- b. primary circular reactions.
- c. secondary circular reactions.
- d. a well-developed understanding of object permanence.

Explain why your selection is correct. _____

TYPE TWO “Why Wrong” Questions: Approximately 20% of the questions will follow this format:

1. you will be asked to circle the letter indicating the correct answer for the question.

This will be worth 1 point.

2. you will be asked to give a brief explanation for why the three answers you DID NOT select are INCORRECT answers. Each of the three responses will be worth 2 points.

“Why Wrong” Example Question: The process by which the zygote creates new cells is called?

- a. meiosis.
- b. crossing over.
- c. mitosis.
- d. twinning.

WHY WRONG? _____

WHY WRONG? _____

WHY WRONG? _____

NOTE: An exam to be administered in a 50-minute class session may include about 30 questions total, as it takes longer for students to complete “Why Correct?” and “Why Wrong?” items well.

Example #1 – Psychology of Education

TYPE ONE “Why Correct” Questions: Approximately 80% of the questions will follow this format:

1. you will be asked to circle the letter indicating the correct answer for the question.

This will be worth 1 point.

2. you will be asked to give a brief explanation for why the answer you selected is the correct answer. The explanation will be worth 2 points.

“Why Correct” Example Question: The "art versus science" issue in teaching is probably best answered by which of the following statements?

- a. Teaching requires the ability to team and apply specific rules.
- b. Teaching requires the use of scientific methods.
- c. Teaching is an art because it requires imagination.
- d. Teaching, like medicine, requires learned skills and creativity.

Explain why your selection is correct. _____

TYPE TWO “Why Wrong” Questions: Approximately 20% of the questions will follow this format:

1. you will be asked to circle the letter indicating the correct answer for the question.

This will be worth 1 point.

2. you will be asked to give a brief explanation for why the three answers you DID NOT select are INCORRECT answers. Each of the three responses will be worth 2 points.

“Why Wrong” Example Question: Which of the following students is most likely to succeed academically?

- a. Jonathan, a Native-American, who lives in a middle-class suburban house.
- b. Corinne, a Caucasian, who lives in an urban government housing project.
- c. Rosalinda, a Hispanic-American, who lives in an elite community in Beverly Hills.
- d. James, a Puerto-Rican, who lives in a middle-class suburban apartment building.

WHY WRONG? _____

WHY WRONG? _____

WHY WRONG? _____

NOTE: An exam to be administered in a 50-minute class session may include about 30 questions total, as it takes longer for students to complete “Why Correct?” and “Why Wrong?” items well.

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