

Examples of Discussion Posts

One of the primary benefits of rubrics is that they communicate detailed information about instructor expectations. Sharing examples of discussion posts at different levels of achievement is another helpful practice for clearly communicating expectations.

Here is an example of a discussion post prompt from a psychology instructor.

Prompt: Referencing this week’s reading, describe Freud’s three basic types of anxiety (reality, neurotic, and moral), and reflect upon your own experiences with “being anxious.” Provide examples (real or fictitious) of the sources of each type of anxiety; describe the situation in which you became anxious and the feelings and consequences of the anxiety. To receive full credit, your post must also be well-structured (introduction, body, conclusion), free of spelling and grammatical errors, at least 300 words, and have correct APA citations.

Criteria	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches
Description of anxiety types	Identifies and describes three types of anxiety with references to the reading (using APA style citations)	Identifies and describes two types of anxiety with references to the reading (using APA style citations)	Identifies and describes one or two types of anxiety
Examples	Provides examples of sources and consequences of each of the three types of anxiety	Provides examples of sources and consequences of two types of anxiety	Provides vague or no examples
Writing	Well-structured writing, free of spelling and grammatical errors	Well-structured writing with some spelling or grammatical errors	Poorly structured with spelling and/or grammatical errors
Word count	At least 300 words	Less than 300 words	Less than 300 words

This example discussion post exceeds expectations:

According to Freud, our personalities are composed of the id, ego and superego (Feist & Feist, 2009). The id refers to the impulsive self whose main focus lies within the concept of self-pleasure. The ego on the other hand refers to the realistic way of dealing with the id’s demands. Lastly, the superego refers to the ideal self. It seems to find a balance between the “should” and “should not’s”; it can be identified as our conscience. The interaction among these can sometimes lead to different forms of anxiety as one tries to please the other. In fact, according to Feist and Feist (2009), although “only the ego can feel or produce or feel anxiety” (p. 33), the id, superego and external world are all somehow involved in anxiety.

Anxiety can best be defined as “a felt, affective, unpleasant state accompanied by a physical sensation that warns the person against impending danger” (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 33). There are three different types of anxiety each linked to a specific area of our persona.

The first type is neurotic anxiety, which can be linked to the id’s impulses. It is the “apprehension about an unknown danger” (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 34). I for instance experience what can be described as neurotic anxiety when I have some kind of job interview or something similar. I feel like this stems from the fact that having grown up with very strict parents, I constantly felt as if I was not good enough for their standards. Feeling as if my attempts to please them weren’t ever good enough has led me to feel as if I simply can’t ever meet authorities’ standards. This leads to what is known as neurotic anxiety.

Moral anxiety, on the other hand, roots from “conflict between the ego and superego” (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 34). In other words, it is conflict between what our subconscious wants and what is actually morally acceptable. I guess this is the type of anxiety I feel when I tell a little white lie and all of a sudden I’m too anxious to sleep at night. Sure, it’s not a huge deal; we’ve all been there and said, “Sorry I can’t go, I’m not feeling well.” This is my typical response when I don’t want to hurt someone’s feelings by admitting I just don’t want to go. However, the idea that I lied usually eats at my conscience, because lying is not morally correct, no matter the circumstances.

Lastly, there is realistic anxiety, which stems from a possible yet realistic danger (Feist & Feist, 2009). For me, this comes when driving in the rain. There is a huge, very realistic danger involved with driving on a wet surface, especially in Texas, because it does not happen often and other drivers seem to not know how to drive in the rain. Therefore, I feel anxious when I am on the highway with them.

Many of us have experienced the types of anxiety that Freud described. Learning about the different types of anxiety and their causes can help us to understand ourselves and others when anxieties arise.

References

Feist, J. & Feist, G. J. (2009). *Theories of personality* (7th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Instructor Comments: The student fully responds to the discussion prompt instructions. Specifically, the student states the meaning of each of the three types of anxiety and describes the situation in which he becomes anxious as well as the feelings and consequences of the anxiety. The student references the definition of the anxiety feelings. The writing is well-organized, relatively free of errors, and utilizes APA citations.

This example discussion post meets expectations:

I enjoyed reading about the different types of anxiety. The definitions by (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 34) of the three types of anxiety (reality, neurotic, and moral) provided a baseline for me to examine my occasional feelings of anxiety.

The anxiety type of realistic anxiety, defined as “a felt, affective, unpleasant state accompanied by a physical sensation that warns the person against impending danger” (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 33) held particular meaning to me. It reminded me of the time that I was in a convenience store when a person with a gun held up the owner of the store. I could feel my heart pounding and trying to make myself invisible. Another time I felt in terrible danger was when I was driving on Interstate 75 and a car came out of the right and just careened across three lanes of traffic before landing on the grassy media strip. My heart was still pounding when I saw the car had not stopped, but was careening again across all lanes of traffic coming close to me. I managed to elude it by pressing the accelerator to the floor and getting out of the way. I felt anxious the entire rest of my drive home and could not relax the rest of the day.

Another type of anxiety, this time of the neurotic type is defined as “apprehension about an unknown danger” (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 34). The only occasion that comes to mind for me that I have experienced is when I have awakened from dreams feeling terribly nervous and concerned, but not knowing why. That is all I have to say.

Instructor Comments: This post is quite good in the discussion about realistic anxiety but does not provide very much discussion about neurotic anxiety and does not address the third type of anxiety, moral anxiety, at all. The writing is clear and relatively free of errors, but the closing is inadequate. The post also falls short of the 300-word requirement.

This example discussion post approaches expectations:

I don’t understand the link between the three types of anxiety and the id, ego and superego. And the three types of anxiety all blend into the same uneasy feeling of nervousness. I know that I have felt anxious about making good moral decisions, in following rules, but I haven’t lost any sleep over it.

The anxiety type of neurotic anxiety, that might be defined as anxiety about nothing truly real or present, is common among many of my friends. They worry, worry, and worry some more, but without any basis for their worry.

If these anxieties are about the id, ego and superego fighting one another, I wish the examples were much clearer.

Instructor Comments: This post provides some general feedback on the reading but does not provide in-depth discussion about the three different types of anxieties and does not reference the readings. It is not well-structured and does not meet the 300-word requirement.

Adapted from Wright, L. How to write a good discussion board post. Retrieved from <https://psychstartup.wordpress.com/2013/12/09/how-to-write-a-good-discussion-board-post/>