



Critical Paragraphing Examples

Study Development Worksheet

- What makes these paragraphs critical?
- Can we fit them into a **Point**, **Evidence** and **Evaluation**?
- What do they do well? What could still be improved?

Example One: Behaviour Management in the Classroom

Modelling self-discipline and positive communication has been argued to be an effective classroom management strategy, whereas negative communication such as threats and punishment generates poor behaviour (Ginott, 1971). For example, the teacher I work with puts great care in communicating positively and respectfully with students (e.g. thanking them for their input, offering support discreetly), which is thought to improve their self-concept, in turn leading to good behaviour (Ginott, 1971). The assumption that a better self-concept improves classroom behaviour and performance by itself, however, has not been supported by past research (Schreier & Kraut, 1979; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991). In fact, data obtained by Seligman (1995) indicate that many individuals with higher than normal levels of self-esteem have higher levels of disruptive behaviour than those with lower levels of self-esteem. Positive self-concept may therefore not always prompt good behaviour, and Ginott's model does not indicate how to tackle those students who continue to exhibit challenging behaviour. Indeed, our pupils still occasionally misbehave, and the teacher resorts to threats of punishment when all else seems to fail. While many of the procedures used in Ginott's model are widely considered good practice (e.g., congruent messages, allowing choices), there is a lack of research validating this approach, and it does not appear entirely effective in my setting.

Example Two: Occupational Therapy and Labelling Theory

Within labelling theory social identity is defined by the traits that are ascribed by a given label (Dudley, 1983). With the label of mental illness these are negative traits. Looking at the social identity of someone suffering from mental illness it is possible to see the negative stigma that is attached to this label. Fear, contempt, disgust and pity, are stereotypes deeply rooted in historical generalisation regarding 'madness', but continue to be maintained and exacerbated by the negative portrayal of mental illness in the media (Pilgrim, 2005). Images particularly portraying violence and danger are crucial in the maintenance of negative stereotypes and create a social distance (Link et al 1999).



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Additionally, as Garfinkel (1956) suggests, this new identity becomes internalised hence maintaining the expectations of others. Their old identity is then replaced by the new, which Goffman (1961) referred to as a 'status degradation ceremony'. The identity and social status of the person is significantly and often irrevocably altered. In the process the negative assumptions and expectations that are attached to the label become shared, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Expectations of low confidence, minimal interactions, and social distance then become a reality and accepted by both society and the person as the normal progression of such a clinical diagnosis (Pilgrim, 2005). Therefore the label on some level creates the deviant behaviour.

Example Three: Design Activism

Activism and design are practices embedded in everyday life. They do this by engaging with often similar matters of concern, implying change and transformation, in order to make social and political issues visible to the larger public. Jordan (2001) suggests that contemporary activists take into consideration ethical issues which "may underpin or inform future societies" (p. 9). They use tactics such as "non-violent direct action, dis/organization, pleasure-politics, culture jamming and hacktivism" (p. 9). According to Porta and Diani (2006), contemporary activism integrates many different social solidarities that challenge different social hostilities "in the context of radicalized forms of democracy" (p. 20). Therefore, being an activist involves often tackling a set of practices simultaneously to reach an overarching set of goals, to mobilise further, and get involved in movement activities.

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