Essay Support 🡪 Cognitive Approach

**Topic: Write the learning outcome (topic) below**

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| --- |
|  **Evaluate schema theory**  |

**Directions:** Take notes below in any form you wish (full sentences for some or all, bullet points, use colour coding – outline in a way that works for you). You can respond to a prompt and then delete it – leave it there. It’s up to you. You should be able to turn to essay plans for straightforward revision in exams, Mocks, May. This does assume you complete them and add to them as we study.

**Brief Introduction:**

Address the question in opening line:

* *Memory as a cognitive construct is complex to study, but schema theory offers a robust way to understand how we encode, store and retrieve information.*

Vocabulary/specific terms: *define ‘schema’; quick overview – 3 types of S; a few functions (regulate, predict, organize)*

Establish focus – why is the topic/investigation important to psychology?

* *It is critical for psychologists to understand how memory is stored and retrieved so they have wider understanding of practical applications that may rely on this process, such as in criminal courts.*

Thesis: *Schema theory has been empirically tested and provides quite a wide scope for understanding how context impacts recall, however it is somewhat incomplete in its explanation of memory.*

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**Body paragraph (BP1):** What’s your intention in this paragraph? Why did you choose it to come first? (background knowledge ST; historical awareness)

Topic sentence: *Early research showed that the valid concept of schema could be psychologically tested.*

Research you wish to include: Bartlett’s (1932) WofG - quick outline

Critical thinking point: *B’s work shows that ST was somewhat difficult to test but importantly shows that schemas distort (level, sharpen, assimilate). Key for sharpening methodology & providing further evidence*

Transition: *Bartlett’s early, loosely controlled experiment created a vacuum for tighter methodological approach and further theoretical support.*

**BP2:** What’s your intention in this paragraph? (Use a tight study to show methodological development as support for ST)

Topic sentence: Using tightly controlled experimental method, Bransford & Johnson (1972) showed that schemas influence memory beyond retrieval.

Research you wish to include: Bransford & Johnson (1972) a/p/f

Critical thinking point: *ST tested in lab; C&E inferred due to IV; empirically evidenced; + point for theory and that retrieval not the only phase schemas influence; theoretical usefulness is widening BUT lack of EV – lab environments do not show how memory typically functions in real world.*

Transition: Not only is written or verbal context important for illustrating ST, so too is setting and perception.

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**BP:** What’s your intention in this paragraph? Why have you saved this content until now? (Build on argument from B&J with ref to Brewer & Treyins – less artificial method. More diverse support for theory.

Topic sentence: Brewer & Treyin’s well known office study further showed that schemas form what we think we know.

Research you wish to include: Brewer & Treyins a/p/f

Critical thinking point: study shows that perception and expectations – stereotypes even – of location can impact our perceptions. Scope that ST addresses further widening. Reinforces argument that schemas are imperfect.

Transition: Research into ST has addressed different stages schemas can influence recall but perception is also key to this theory.

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**BP:** What’s your intention in this paragraph? Why have you saved this topic for the end? (I want to use Darley & Gross here to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Research you wish to include:

Critical thinking points:

Transition:

**BP:** What’s your intention in this paragraph? Why have you saved this topic for the end? (I want to focus on what ST does not offer – where it’s lacking)

Topic sentence: Schema theory, although clearly useful for understanding knowledge construction, lacks the ability to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Critical thinking point

**Brief conclusion:**

Revisit your initial thesis

A few lines of closure

Quickly, reference a study or theory. This is so you can show applied knowledge and conceptual understanding.

Close